SO RUNS THE WORLD

BY

HENRY SIENKIEWICZ

AUTHOR OF "QUO VADIS"

F. TENNYSON NEELY, PUBLISHER, NEW YORK & LONDON

Frank Hollis

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"QUO VADIS," ETC.

Translated by S. C. de SOISSONS

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Frank Hollis

Part First.

HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ.

I ONCE read a short story, in which a Slav author had all the lilies and bells in a forest bending toward each other, whispering and resounding softly the words: "Glory! Glory! Glory!" until the whole forest and then the whole world repeated the song of flowers.

Such is to-day the fate of the author of the powerful historical trilogy: "With Fire and Sword," "The Deluge" and "Pan Michael," preceded by short stories, "Lillian Morris," "Yanko the Musician," "After Bread," "Hania," "Let Us Follow Him," followed by two problem novels, "Without Dogma," and

Frank Hollis

"Children of the Soil," and crowned by a masterpiece of an incomparable artistic beauty, "Quo Vadis." Eleven good books adopted from the Polish language and set into circulation are of great importance for the English-reading people—just now I am emphasizing only this—because these books are written in the most beautiful language ever written by any Polish author! Eleven books of masterly, personal, and simple prose! Eleven good books given to the circulation and received not only with admiration but with gratitude—books where there are more or less good or sincere pages, but where there is not one on which original humor, nobleness, charm, some comforting thoughts, some elevated sentiments do not shine. Some other author would perhaps have stopped after producing "Quo Vadis," without any doubt the best of Sienkiewicz's books. But Sienkiewicz looks into the future and cares more about works which he is going

to write, than about those which we have already in our libraries, and he renews his talents, searching, perhaps unknowingly, for new themes and tendencies.

When one knows how to read a book, then from its pages the author's face looks out on him, a face not material, but just the same full of life. Sienkiewicz's face, looking on us from his books, is not always the same; it changes, and in his last book ("Quo Vadis") it is quite different, almost new.

There are some people who throw down a book after having read it, as one leaves a bottle after having drank the wine from it. There are others who read books with a pencil in their hands, and they mark the most striking passages. Afterward, in the hours of rest, in the moments when one needs a stimulant from within and one searches for harmony, sympathy of a thing apparently so dead and strange as a book is, they come back

to the marked passages, to their own thoughts, more comprehensible since an author expressed them; to their own sentiments, stronger and more natural since they found them in somebody else's words. Because oftimes it seems to us—the common readers—that there is no difference between our interior world and the horizon of great authors, and we flatter ourselves by believing that we are only less daring, less brave than are thinkers and poets, that some interior lack of courage stopped us from having formulated our impressions. And in this sentiment there is a great deal of truth. But while this expression of our thoughts seems to us to be a daring, to the others it is a need; they even do not suspect how much they are daring and new. They must, according to the words of a poet, "Spin out the love, as the silkworm spins its web." That is their capital distinction from common mortals; we recognize

them by it at once; and that is the reason we put them above the common level. On the pages of their books we find not the traces of the accidental, deeper penetrating into the life or more refined feelings, but the whole harvest of thoughts, impressions, dispositions, written skilfully, because studied deeply. We also leave something on these pages. Some people dry flowers on them, the others preserve reminiscences. In every one of Sienkiewicz's volumes people will deposit a great many personal impressions, part of their souls; in every one they will find them again after many years.

There are three periods in Sienkiewicz's literary life. In the first he wrote short stories, which are masterpieces of grace and ingenuity—at least some of them. In those stories the reader will meet frequent thoughts about general problems, deep observations of life—and notwithstanding his idealism,

very truthful about spiritual moods, expressed with an easy and sincere hand. Speaking about Sienkiewicz's works, no matter how small it may be, one has always the feeling that one speaks about a known, living in general memory work. Almost every one of his stories is like a stone thrown in the midst of a flock of sparrows gathering in the winter time around barns: one throw arouses at once a flock of winged reminiscences.

The other characteristics of his stories are uncommonness of his conceptions, masterly compositions, ofttimes artificial. It happens also that a story has no plot ("From the Diary of a Tutor in Pozman," "Bartek the Victor"), no action, almost no matter ("Yamyol"), but the reader is rewarded by simplicity, rural theme, humoristic pictures ("Comedy of Errors: A Sketch of American Life"), pity for the little and poor ("Yanko the Musi-

cian"), and those qualities make the reader remember his stories well. It is almost impossible to forget—under the general impressions—about his striking and standing-out figures ("The Lighthouse Keeper of Aspinwall"), about the individual impression they leave on our minds. Apparently they are commonplace, every-day people, but the author's talent puts on them an original individuality, a particular stamp, which makes one remember them forever and afterward apply them to the individuals which one meets in life. No matter how insignificant socially is the figure chosen by Sienkiewicz for his story, the great talent of the author magnifies its striking features, not seen by common people, and makes of it a masterpiece of literary art.

Although we have a popular saying: *Comparaison n'est pas raison,* one cannot refrain from stating here that this love for the poor, the little, and the oppressed, brought out so

powerfully in Sienkiewicz's short stories, constitutes a link between him and François Coppée, who is so great a friend of the friendless and the oppressed, those who, without noise, bear the heaviest chains, the pariahs of our happy and smiling society. The only difference between the short stories of these two writers is this, that notwithstanding all the mastercraft of Coppée's work, one forgets the impressions produced by the reading of his work—while it is almost impossible to forget "The Lighthouse Keeper" looking on any lighthouse, or "Yanko the Musician" listening to a poor wandering boy playing on the street, or "Bartek the Victor" seeing soldiers of which military discipline have made machines rather than thinking beings, or "The Diary of a Tutor" contemplating the pale face of children overloaded with studies. Another difference between those two writers—the comparison is always between their short stories—is this,

that while Sienkiewicz's figures and characters are universal, international—if one can use this adjective here—and can be applied to the students of any country, to the soldiers of any nation, to any wandering musician and to the light-keeper on any sea, the figures of François Coppée are mostly Parisian and could be hardly displaced from their Parisian surroundings and conditions.

Sometimes the whole short story is written for the sake of that which the French call *pointe*. When one has finished the reading of "Zeus's Sentence," for a moment the charming description of the evening and Athenian night is lost. And what a beautiful description it is! If the art of reading were cultivated in America as it is in France and Germany, I would not be surprised if some American Legouvé or Strakosch were to add to his répertoire such productions of prose as this humorously poetic "Zeus's

Sentence," or that mystic madrigal, "Be Blessed."

"But the dusk did not last long," writes Sienkiewicz. "Soon from the Archipelago appeared the pale Selene and began to sail like a silvery boat in the heavenly space. And the walls of the Acropolis lighted again, but they beamed now with a pale green light, and looked more than ever like the vision of a dream."

But all these, and other equally charming pictures, disappear for a moment from the memory of the reader. There remains only the final joke—only Zeus's sentence. "A virtuous woman—especially when she loves another man—can resist Apollo. But surely and always a stupid woman will resist him."

Only when one thinks of the story does one see that the ending—that "immoral conclusion" I should say if I were not able to understand the joke—does not constitute the essence

of the story. Only then we find a delight in the description of the city for which the wagons cater the divine barley, and the water is carried by the girls, "with amphoræ poised on their shoulders and lifted hands, going home, light and graceful, like immortal nymphs."

And then follow such paragraphs as the following, which determine the real value of the work:

"The voice of the God of Poetry sounded so beautiful that it performed a miracle. Behold! In the Ambrosian night the gold spear standing on the Acropolis of Athens trembled, and the marble head of the gigantic statue turned toward the Acropolis in order to hear better. . . . Heaven and earth listened to it; the sea stopped roaring and lay peacefully near the shores; even pale Selene stopped her night wandering in the sky and stood motionless over Athens."

"And when Apollo had finished, a light wind arose and carried the song through the whole of Greece, and wherever a child in the cradle heard only a tone of it, that child grew into a poet."

What poet? Famed by what song? Will he not perhaps be a lyric poet?

The same happens with "Lux in Tenebris." One reads again and again the description of the fall of the mist and the splashing of the rain dropping in the gutter, "the cawing of the crows, migrating to the city for their winter quarters, and, with flapping of wings, roosting in the trees." One feels that the whole misery of the first ten pages was necessary in order to form a background for the two pages of heavenly light, to bring out the brightness of that light. "Those who have lost their best beloved," writes Sienkiewicz, "must hang their lives on something; otherwise they could not exist." In such sentences

—and it is not the prettiest, but the shortest that I have quoted—resounds, however, the quieting wisdom, the noble love of that art which poor Kamionka "respected deeply and was always sincere toward." During the long years of his profession he never cheated nor wronged it, neither for the sake of fame nor money, nor for praise nor for criticism. He always wrote as he felt. Were I not like Ruth of the Bible, doomed to pick the ears of corn instead of being myself a sower—if God had not made me critic and worshipper but artist and creator—I could not wish for another necrology than those words of Sienkiewicz regarding the statuary Kamionka.

Quite another thing is the story "At the Source." None of the stories except "Let Us Follow Him" possess for me so many transcendent beauties, although we are right to be angry with the author for having wished, during the reading of several pages, to make us

believe an impossible thing—that he was deceiving us. It is true that he has done it in a masterly manner—it is true that he could not have done otherwise, but at the same time there is a fault in the conception, and although Sienkiewicz has covered the precipice with flowers, nevertheless the precipice exists.

On the other hand, it is true that one reading the novel will forget the trick of the author and will see in it only the picture of an immense happiness and a hymn in the worship of love. Perhaps the poor student is right when he says: "Among all the sources of happiness, that from which I drank during the fever is the clearest and best." "A life which love has not visited, even in a dream, is still worse."

Love and faith in woman and art are two constantly recurring themes in "Lux in Tenebris," "At the Source," "Be Blessed," and "Organist of Ponikila."

When Sienkiewicz wrote "Let Us Follow Him," some critics cried angrily that he lessens his talent and moral worth of the literature; they regretted that he turned people into the false road of mysticism, long since left. Having found Christ on his pages, the least religious people have recollected how gigantic he is in the writings of Heine, walking over land and sea, carrying a red, burning sun instead of a heart. They all understood that to introduce Christ not only worthily or beautifully, but simply and in such a manner that we would not be obliged to turn away from the picture, would be a great art—almost a triumph.

In later times we have made many such attempts. "The Mysticism" became to-day an article of commerce. The religious tenderness and simplicity was spread among Parisian newspaper men, playwrights and novelists. Such as Armand Sylvèstre, such as

Theodore de Wyzewa, are playing at writing up Christian dogmas and legends. And a strange thing! While the painters try to bring the Christ nearer to the crowd, while Fritz von Uhde or Lhermitte put the Christ in a country school, in a workingman's house, the weakling writers, imitating poets, dress Him in old, faded, traditional clothes and surround Him with a theatrical light which they dare to call "mysticism." They are crowding the porticos of the temple, but they are merely merchants. Anatole France alone cannot be placed in the same crowd.

In "Let Us Follow Him" the situation and characters are known, and are already to be found in literature. But never were they painted so simply, so modestly, without romantic complaints and exclamations. In the first chapters of that story there appears an epic writer with whom we have for a long time been familiar. We are accustomed to

that uncommon simplicity. But in order to appreciate the narrative regarding Antea, one must listen attentively to this slow prose and then one will notice the rhythmic sentences following one after the other. Then one feels that the author is building a great foundation for the action. Sometimes there occurs a brief, sharp sentence ending in a strong, short word, and the result is that Sienkiewicz has given us a masterpiece which justifies the enthusiasm of a critic, who called him a Prince of Polish Prose.

In the second period of his literary activity, Sienkiewicz has produced his remarkable historical trilogy, "The Deluge," "With Fire and Sword," and "Pan Michael," in which his talent shines forth powerfully, and which possess absolutely distinctive characters from his short stories. The admirers of romanticism cannot find any better books in historical fiction. Some critic has said righteously about Sinkie-

wicz, speaking of his "Deluge," that he is "the first of Polish novelists, past or present, and second to none now living in England, France, or Germany."

Sienkiewicz being himself a nobleman, therefore naturally in his historical novels he describes the glorious deeds of the Polish nobility, who, being located on the frontier of such barbarous nations as Turks, Kozaks, Tartars, and Wolochs (to-day Roumania), had defended Europe for centuries from the invasions of barbarism and gave the time to Germany, France, and England to outstrip Poland in the development of material welfare and general civilization among the masses—the nobility being always very refined—though in the fifteenth century the literature of Poland and her sister Bohemia (Chechy) was richer than any other European country, except Italy. One should at least always remember that Nicolaus Kopernicus

(Kopernik) was a Pole and John Huss was a Chech.

Historical novels began in England, or rather in Scotland, by the genius of Walter Scott, followed in France by Alexandre Dumas *père*. These two great writers had numerous followers and imitators in all countries, and every nation can point out some more or less successful writer in that field, but who never attained the great success of Sienkiewicz, whose works are translated into many languages, even into Russian, where the antipathy for the Polish superior degree of civilization is still very eager.

The superiority of Sienkiewicz's talent is then affirmed by this fact of translation, and I would dare say that he is superior to the father of this kind of novels, on account of his historical coloring, so much emphasized in Walter Scott. This important quality in the historical novel is truer and more lively in the

Polish writer, and then he possesses that psychological depth about which Walter Scott never dreamed. Walter Scott never has created such an original and typical figure as Zagloba is, who is a worthy rival to Shakespeare's Falstaff. As for the description of duelings, fights, battles, Sienkiewicz's fantastically heroic pen is without rival.

Alexandre Dumas, notwithstanding the biting criticism of Brunetière, will always remain a great favorite with the reading masses, who are searching in his books for pleasure, amusement, and distraction. Sienkiewicz's historical novels possess all the interesting qualities of Dumas, and besides that they are full of wholesome food for thinking minds. His colors are more shining, his brush is broader, his composition more artful, chiselled, finished, better built, and executed with more vigor. While Dumas amuses, pleases, distracts, Sienkiewicz astonishes, surprises, be-

witches. All uneasy preoccupations, the dolorous echoes of eternal problems, which philosophical doubt imposes with the everlasting anguish of the human mind, the mystery of the origin, the enigma of destiny, the inexplicable necessity of suffering, the short, tragical, and sublime vision of the future of the soul, and the future not less difficult to be guessed of by the human race in this material world, the torments of human conscience and responsibility for the deeds, is said by Sienkiewicz without any pedanticism, without any dryness.

If we say that the great Hungarian author Maurice Jokay, who also writes historical novels, pales when compared with that fascinating Pole who leaves far behind him the late lions in the field of romanticism, Stanley J. Weyman and Anthony Hope, we are through with that part of Sienkiewicz's literary achievements.

In the third period Sienkiewicz is represented by two problem novels, "Without Dogma" and "Children of the Soil."

The charm of Sienkiewicz's psychological novels is the synthesis so seldom realized and as I have already said, the plastic beauty and abstract thoughts. He possesses also an admirable assurance of psychological analysis, a mastery in the painting of customs and characters, and the rarest and most precious faculty of animating his heroes with intense, personal life, which, though it is only an illusionary life, appears less deceitful than the real life.

In that field of novels Sienkiewicz differs greatly from Balzac, for instance, who forced himself to paint the man in his perversity or in his stupidity. According to his views life is the racing after riches. The whole of Balzac's philosophy can be resumed in the deification of the force. All his heroes are

"strong men" who disdain humanity and take advantage of it. Sienkiewicz's psychological novels are not lacking in the ideal in his conception of life; they are active powers, forming human souls. The reader finds there, in a well-balanced proportion, good and bad ideas of life, and he represents this life as a good thing, worthy of living.

He differs also from Paul Bourget, who as a German savant counts how many microbes are in a drop of spoiled blood, who is pleased with any ferment, who does not care for healthy souls, as a doctor does not care for healthy people—and who is fond of corruption. Sienkiewicz's analysis of life is not exclusively pathological, and we find in his novels healthy as well as sick people as in the real life. He takes colors from twilight and aurora to paint with, and by doing so he strengthens our energy, he stimulates our ability for thinking about those eternal problems, difficult to be

decided, but which existed and will exist as long as humanity will exist.

He prefers green fields, the perfume of flowers, health, virtue, to Zola's liking for crime, sickness, cadaverous putridness, and manure. He prefers *l'âme humaine* to *la bête humaine*.

He is never vulgar even when his heroes do not wear any gloves, and he has these common points with Shakespeare and Molière, that he does not paint only certain types of humanity, taken from one certain part of the country, as it is with the majority of French writers who do not go out of their dear Paris; in Sienkiewicz's novels one can find every kind of people, beginning with humble peasants and modest noblemen created by God, and ending with proud lords made by the kings.

In the novel "Without Dogma," there are many keen and sharp observations, said mas-

terly and briefly; there are many states of the soul, if not always very deep, at least written with art. And his merit in that respect is greater than of any other writers, if we take in consideration that in Poland heroic lyricism and poetical picturesqueness prevail in the literature.

The one who wishes to find in the modern literature some aphorism to classify the characteristics of the people, in order to be able afterward to apply them to their fellow-men, must read "Children of the Soil."

But the one who is less selfish and wicked, and wishes to collect for his own use such a library as to be able at any moment to take a book from a shelf and find in it something which would make him thoughtful or would make him forget the ordinary life,—he must get "Quo Vadis," because there he will find pages which will recomfort him by their beauty and dignity; it will enable him to go

out from his surroundings and enter into himself, *i.e.*, in that better man whom we sometimes feel in our interior. And while reading this book he ought to leave on its pages the traces of his readings, some marks made with a lead pencil or with his whole memory.

It seems that in that book a new man was aroused in Sienkiewicz, and any praise said about this unrivaled masterpiece will be as pale as any powerful lamp is pale comparatively with the glory of the sun. For instance, if I say that Sienkiewicz has made a thorough study of Nero's epoch, and that his great talent and his plastic imagination created the most powerful pictures in the historical background, will it not be a very tame praise, compared with his book—which, while reading it, one shivers and the blood freezes in one's veins?

In "Quo Vadis" the whole *alta Roma*, beginning with slaves carrying mosaics for

their refined masters, and ending with patricians, who were so fond of beautiful things that one of them for instance used to kiss at every moment a superb vase, stands before our eyes as if it was reconstructed by a magical power from ruins and death.

There is no better description of the burning of Rome in any literature. While reading it everything turns red in one's eyes, and immense noiṣes fill one's ears. And the moment when Christ appears on the hill to the frightened Peter, who is going to leave Rome, not feeling strong enough to fight with mighty Cæsar, will remain one of the strongest passages of the literature of the whole world.

After having read again and again this great—shall I say the greatest historical novel?—and having wondered at its deep conception, masterly execution, beautiful language, powerful painting of the epoch, plastic description of customs and habits, enthusiasm

of the first followers of Christ, refinement of Roman civilization, corruption of the old world, the question rises: What is the dominating idea of the author, spread out all over the whole book? It is the cry of Christians murdered in circuses: *Pro Christo!*

Sienkiewicz searching always and continually for a tranquil harbor from the storms of conscience and investigation of the tormented mind, finds such a harbor in the religious sentiments, in lively Christian faith. This idea is woven as golden thread in a silk brocade, not only in "Quo Vadis," but also in all his novels. In "Fire and Sword" his principal hero is an outlaw; but all his crimes, not only against society, but also against nature, are redeemed by faith, and as a consequence of it afterward by good deeds. In the "Children of the Soul," he takes one of his principal characters upon one of seven Roman hills, and having displayed before him in the most eloquent

way the might of the old Rome, the might as it never existed before and perhaps never will exist again, he says: "And from all that nothing is left only crosses! crosses! crosses!" It seems to us that in "Quo Vadis" Sienkiewicz strained all his forces to reproduce from one side all the power, all riches, all refinement, all corruption of the Roman civilization in order to get a better contrast with the great advantages of the cry of the living faith: *Pro Christo!* In that cry the asphyxiated not only in old times but in our days also find refreshment; the tormented by doubt, peace. From that cry flows hope, and naturally people prefer those from whom the blessing comes to those who curse and doom them.

Sienkiewicz considers the Christian faith as the principal and even the only help which humanity needs to bear cheerfully the burden and struggle of every-day life. Equally his personal experience as well as his studies

made him worship Christ. He is not one of those who say that religion is good for the people at large. He does not admit such a shade of contempt in a question touching so near the human heart. He knows that every one is a man in the presence of sorrow and the conundrum of fate, contradiction of justice, tearing of death, and uneasiness of hope. He believes that the only way to cross the precipice is the flight with the wings of faith, the precipice made between the submission to general and absolute laws and the confidence in the infinite goodness of the Father.

The time passes and carries with it people and doctrines and systems. Many authors left as the heritage to civilization rows of books, and in those books scepticism, indifference, doubt, lack of precision and decision.

But the last symptoms in the literature show us that the Stoicism is not sufficient for our generation, not satisfied with Marcus

Aurelius's gospel, which was not sufficient even to that brilliant Sienkiewicz's Roman *arbiter elegantiarum*, the over-refined patrician Petronius. A nation which desired to live, and does not wish either to perish in the desert or be drowned in the mud, needs such a great help which only religion gives. The history is not only *magister vitæ*, but also it is the master of conscience.

Literature has in Sienkiewicz a great poet—epical as well as lyrical.

I shall not mourn, although I appreciate the justified complaint about objectivity in *belles lettres*. But now there is no question what poetry will be; there is the question whether it will be, and I believe that society, being tired with Zola's realism and its caricature, not with the picturesqueness of Loti, but with catalogues of painter's colors; not with the depth of Ibsen, but the oddness of his imitators—it seems to me that society will hate the

poetry which discusses and philosophizes, wishes to paint but does not feel, makes archeology but does not give impressions, and that people will turn to the poetry as it was in the beginning, what is in its deepest essence, to the flight of single words, to the interior melody, to the song—the art of sounds being the greatest art. I believe that if in the future the poetry will find listeners, they will repeat to the poets the words of Paul Verlaine, whom by too summary judgment they count among incomprehensible originals:

"*De la musique encore et toujours.*"

And nobody need be afraid, from a social point of view, for Sienkiewicz's objectivity. It is a manly lyricism as well as epic, made deep by the knowledge of the life, sustained by thinking, until now perhaps unconscious of itself, the poetry of a writer who walked many roads, studied many things, knew

much bitterness, ridiculed many triflings, and then he perceived that a man like himself has only one aim: above human affairs "to spin the love, as the silkworm spins its web."

S. C. DE SOISSONS.

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PART SECOND

SO RUNS THE WORLD.

ZOLA.

I HAVE a great respect for every accomplished work. Every time I put on the end of any of my works *finis*, I feel satisfied; not because the work is done, not on account of future success, but on account of an accomplished deed.

Every book is a deed—bad or good, but at any rate accomplished—and a series of them, written with a special aim, is an accomplished purpose of life; it is a feast during which the workers have the right to receive a wreath, and to sing: "We bring the crop, the crop!"

Evidently the merit depends on the result of the work. The profession of the writer has its thorns about which the reader does not dream. A farmer, bringing the crop to his

barn, has this absolute surety, that he brings wheat, rye, barley, or oats which will be useful to the people. An author, writing even with the best of faith, may have moments of doubt, whether instead of bread he did not give poison, whether his work is not a great mistake or a great misdeed, whether it has brought profit to humanity, or whether, were it not better for the people and himself, had he not written anything, nothing accomplished.

Such doubts are foes to human peace, but at the same time they are a filter, which does not pass any dirt. It is bad when there are too many of them, it is bad when too few; in the first case the ability for deeds disappears, in the second, the conscience. Hence the eternal, as humanity, need of exterior regulator.

But the French writers always had more originality and independence than others, and

that regulator, which elsewhere was religion, long since ceased to exist for them. There were some exceptions, however. Balzac used to affirm that his aim was to serve religion and monarchy. But even the works of those who confessed such principles were not in harmony with themselves. One can say that it pleased the authors to understand their activity in that way, but the reading masses could understand it and often understood it as a negation of religious and ethical principles.

In the last epoch, however, such misunderstanding became impossible, because the authors began to write, either in the name of their personal convictions, directly opposite to social principles and ties, or with objective analysis, which, in its action of life, marks the good and the evil as manifestations equally necessary and equally justified. France—and through France the rest of Europe—was overflowed with a deluge of

books, written with such lightheartedness, so absolute and with such daring, not counting on any responsibility toward people, that even those who received them without any scruples began to be overcome with astonishment. It seemed that every author forced himself to go further than they expected him to. In that way they succeeded in being called daring thinkers and original artists. The boldness in touching certain subjects, and the way of interpreting them, seemed to be the best quality of the writer. To that was joined bad faith, or unconscious deceiving of himself and others. Analysis! They analyzed in the name of truth, which apparently must and has the right to be said, everything, but especially the evil, dirt, human corruption. They did not notice that this pseudo-analysis ceases to be an objective analysis, and becomes a sickish liking for rotten things coming from two causes: in the first place from the corruption

of the taste, then from greater facility of producing striking effects.

They utilized the philological faculty of the senses, on the strength of which repulsive impressions appear to us stronger and more real than agreeable, and they abused that property beyond measure.

There was created a certain kind of travelling in putridness, because the subjects being exhausted very quickly, there was a necessity to find something new which could attract. The truth itself, in the name of which it was done, was put in a corner in the presence of such exigencies. Are you familiar with Zola's "La Terre"? This novel is to represent a picture of a French village. Try and think of a French village, or of any other village. How does it look altogether? It is a gathering of houses, trees, fields, pastures, wild flowers, people, herds, light, sky, singing, small country business, and work. In all

that, without any doubt, the manure plays an important part, but there is something more behind it and besides it. But Zola's village looks as if it was composed exclusively of manure and crime. Therefore the picture is false, the truth twisted, because in nature the true relation of things is different. If any one would like to take the trouble of making a list of the women represented in French novels, he would persuade himself that at least ninety-five per cent. of them were fallen women. But in society it is not, and cannot be, so. Probably even in the countries where they worshipped Astarte, there were less bad women. Notwithstanding this, the authors try to persuade us that they are giving a true picture of society, and that their analysis of customs is an objective one. The lie, exaggeration, liking for rotten things—such is the exact picture in contemporary novels. I do not know what profit there is in literature like

that, but I do know that the devil has not lost anything, because through this channel flows a river of mud and poison, and the moral sense became so dulled that finally they tolerated such books which a few decades ago would have brought the author to court. Today we do not wish to believe that the author of "Madame Bovary" had two criminal suits. Had this book been written twenty years later, they would have found it too modest.

But the human spirit, which does not slumber, and the organism that wishes to live, does not suffer excess of poison. Finally there came a moment for hiccoughs of disgust. Some voices began to rise asking for other spiritual bread; an instinctive sentiment awakes and cries that it cannot continue any longer in this way, that one must arise, shake off the mud, clean, change! The people ask for a fresh breeze. The masses cannot say what they want, but they know what they do

not want; they know they are breathing bad air, and that they are suffocating. An uneasiness takes hold of their minds. Even in France they are seeking and crying for something different; they began to protest against the actual state of affairs. Many writers felt that uneasiness. They had some moments of doubt, about which I have spoken already, and those doubts were stronger on account of the uncertainty of the new roads. Look at the last books of Bourget, Rod, Barrès, Desjardin, the poetry of Rimbaud, Verlaine, Heredia, Mallarmé, and even Maeterlinck and his school. What do you find there? The searching for new essence and new form, feverish seeking for some issue, uncertainty where to go and where to look for help—in religion or mysticism, in duty outside of faith, or in patriotism or in humanity? Above all, however, one sees in them an immense uneasiness. They do not find any

issue, because for it one needs two things: a great idea and a great talent, and they did not have either of them. Hence the uneasiness increases, and the same authors who arouse against rough pessimism of naturalistic direction fell into pessimism themselves, and by this the principal importance and aim of a reform became weaker. What remains then? The bizarre form. And in this bizarre form, whether it is called symbolism or impressionism, they go in deeper and become more entangled, losing artistic equilibrium, common sense, and serenity of the soul. Often they fall into the former corruption as far as the essence is concerned, and almost always into dissonance with one's self, because they have an honest sentiment that they must give to the world something new, and they know not what.

Such are the present times! Among those searching in darkness, wandering and weary

ones, one remained quiet, sure of himself and his doctrine, immovable and almost serious in his pessimism. It was Emile Zola. A great talent, slow but powerful and a potent force, surprising objectivism if the question is about a sentiment, because it is equal to almost complete indifference, such an exceptional gift of seeing the entire soul of humanity and things that it approaches this naturalistic writer to mystics—all that gives him a very great and unusual originality.

The physical figure does not always reproduce the spiritual individuality. In Zola, this relation comes out very strikingly. A square face, low forehead covered with wrinkles, rough features, high shoulders and short neck, give to his person a rough appearance. Looking at his face and those wrinkles around the eyes, you can guess that he is a man who can stand much, that he is persevering and stubborn, not only in his projects but in the

realization of them; but what is more important, he is so in his thinking also. There is no keenness in him. At the first glance of the eye one can see that he is a doctrinarian shut up in himself, who does not embrace large horizons—sees everything at a certain angle, narrow-mindedly yet seeing distinctly.

His mind, like a dark lantern, throws a narrow light in only one direction, and he goes in that direction with immovable surety. In that way the history of a series of his books called "Les Rougon-Macquart" becomes clear.

Zola was determined to write the history of a certain family at the time of the Empire, on the ground of conditions produced by it, in consideration of the law of heredity.

There was a question even about something more than this consideration, because this heredity had to become the physiological foundation of the work. There is a certain contradiction in the premises. Speaking histori-

cally Rougon-Macquart had to be a picture of French society during its last times. According to their moral manifestations of life, therefore, they ought to be of themselves more or less a normal family. But in such a case what shall one do with heredity? To be sure, moral families are such on the strength of the law of heredity—but it is impossible to show it in such conditions—one can do it only in exceptional cases of the normal type. Therefore the Rougon are in fact a sick family. They are children of nervousness. It was contracted by the first mother of the family, and since that time the coming generations, one after another, followed with the same stigma on their foreheads. This is the way the author wishes to have it, and one must agree with him. In what way, however, can a history of one family exceptionally attainted with a mental disorder be at the same time a picture of French society, the author does not

explain to us. Had he said that during the Empire all society was sick, it would be a trick. A society can walk in the perilous road of politics or customs and be sick as a community, and at the same time have healthy individuals and families. These are two different things. Therefore one of the two: either the Rougon are sick, and in that case the cycle of novels about them is not a picture of French society during the Empire—it is only a psychological study—or the whole physiological foundations, all this heredity on which the cycle is based, in a word Zola's whole doctrine, is nonsense.

I do not know whether any one has paid attention to Zola at this *aut aut!* It is sure that he never thought of it himself. Probably it would not have had any influence, as the criticisms had no influence on his theory of heredity. Critics and physiologists attacked him ofttimes with an arsenal of irrefutable argu-

ments. It did not do any good. They affirmed in vain that the theory of heredity is not proved by any science, and above all it is difficult to grasp it and show it by facts; they pointed in vain that physiology cannot be fantastical and its laws cannot depend on the free conception of an author. Zola listened, continued to write, and in the last volume he gave a genealogical tree of the family of Rougon-Macquart, with such a serenity as if no one ever doubted his theory.

At any rate, this tree has one advantage. It is so pretentious, so ridiculous that it takes away from the theory the seriousness which it would have given to less individual minds. We learn from it that from a nervously sick great-grandmother grows a sick family. But the one who would think that her nervousness is seen in descendants as it is in the physical field, in a certain similar way, in some inclination or passion for something, will be greatly

mistaken. On the contrary, the marvellous tree produces different kinds of fruit. You can find on it red apples, pears, plums, cherries, and everything you might desire. And all that on account of great-grandmother's nervousness. Is it the same way in nature? We do not know. Zola himself does not have any other proofs than clippings from newspapers, describing different crimes; he preserved these clippings carefully as "human documents," and which he uses according to his fancy.

It can be granted to him, but he must not sell us such fancy for the eternal and immutable laws of nature. Grandmother did have nervousness, her nearest friends were in the habit of searching for remedies against ills not in a drug-store, therefore her male and female descendants are such as they must be—namely, criminals, thieves, fast women, honest people, saints, politicians, good mothers,

bankers, farmers, murderers, priests, soldiers, ministers—in a word, everything which in the sphere of the mind, in the sphere of health, in the sphere of wealth and position, in the sphere of profession, can be and are men as well as women in the whole world. One is stupefied voluntarily. What then? And all that on account of grandmother's nervousness? "Yes!" answers the author. But if Adelaïde Fouqué had not had it, her descendants would be good or bad just the same and have the same occupations men and women usually have in this world. "Certainly!" Zola answers; "but Adelaïde Fouqué had nervousness." And further discussion is impossible, because one has to do with a man who his own voluntary fancy takes for a law of nature and his brain cannot be opened with a key furnished by logic. He built a genealogical tree; this tree could have been different—but if it was different, he would sustain that it can be

only such as it is—and he would prefer to be killed rather than be convinced that his theory was worthless.

At any rate, it is such a theory that it is not worth while to quarrel about it. A long time ago it was said that Zola had one good thing —his talent; and one bad—his doctrine. If as a consequence of an inherited nervousness one can become a rascal as well as a good man, a Sister of Charity as well as Nana, a farmer boy as well as Achilles—in that case there is an heredity which does not exist. A man can be that which he wishes to be. The field for good will and responsibility is open, and all those moral foundations on which human life is based come out of the fire safely. We could say to the author that there is too much ado about nothing, and finish with him as one finishes with a doctrinarian and count only his talent. But he cares for something else. No matter if his doctrine is empty, he

makes from it other deductions. The entire cycle of his books speaks precisely. "No matter what you are, saint or criminal, you are such on the strength of the law of heredity, you are such as you must be, and in that case you have neither merit nor are you guilty." Here is the question of responsibility! But we are not going to discuss it. The philosophy has not yet found the proof of the existence of man, and when *cogito ergo sum* of Cartesius was not sufficient for it, the question is still open. Even if all centuries of philosophy affirm it or not, the man is intrinsically persuaded that he exists, and no less persuaded that he is responsible for his whole life, which, without any regard to his theories, is based on such persuasion. And then even the science did not decide the question of the whole responsibility. Against authorities one can quote other authorities, against opinions one can bring other opinions, against deductions

other deductions. But for Zola such opinion is decided. There is only one grandmother Adelaïde, or grandfather Jacques, on whom everything depends. From that point begins, according to my opinion, the bad influence of the writer, because he not only decides difficult questions to be decided once and forever, but he popularizes them and facilitates the corruption of society. No matter if every thief or every murderer can appeal to a grandmother with nervousness. Courts, notwithstanding the cycle of Rougon-Macquart, will place them behind bars. The evil is not in single cases, but in this, that into the human soul a bad pessimism and depression flows, that the charm of life is destroyed, the hope, the energy, the liking for life, and therefore all effort in the direction of good is shattered.

A quoi bon? Such is the question coming by itself. A book is also an activity, forming human souls. If at least the reader would

find in Zola's book the bad and good side of human life in an equal proportion, or at least in such as one can find it in reality! Vain hope! One must climb high in order to get colors from a rainbow or sunset—but everybody has saliva in his mouth and it is easy to paint with it. This naturalist prefers cheap effects more than others do; he prefers mildew to perfumes, *la bête humaine* to *l'âme humaine!*

If we could bring an inhabitant of Venus or Mars to the earth and ask him to judge of life on the earth from Zola's novels, he would say most assuredly: "This life is sometimes quite pure, like 'Le Rève,' but in general it is a thing which smells bad, is slippery, moist, dreadful." And even if the theories on which Zola has based his works were, as they are not, acknowledged truths, what a lack of pity to represent life in such a way to the people, who must live just the same! Does he do it in

order to ruin, to disgust, to poison every action, to paralyze every energy, to discourage all thinking? In the presence of that, we are even sorry that he has a talent. It would have been better for him, for France, that he had not had it. And one wonders that he is not frightened, that when a fear seizes even those who did not lead to corruption, he alone with such a tranquillity finishes his Rougon-Macquart as if he had strengthened the capacity for life of the French people instead of having destroyed it. How is it possible that he cannot understand that people brought up on such corrupted bread and drinking, such bad water, not only will be unable to resist the storm, but even they will not have an inclination to do so! Musset has written in his time this famous verse: "We had already your German Rhine." Zola brings up his society in such a way that, if everything that he planted would take root, the second of Mus-

set's verses would be: "But to-day we will give you even the Seine." But it is not as bad as that. "La Débâcle" is a remarkable book, notwithstanding all its faults, but the soldiers, who will read it, will be defeated by those who in the night sing: "Glory, Glory, Halleluia!"

I consider Zcla's talent as a national misfortune, and I am glad that his times are passing away, that even the most zealous pupils abandon the master who stands alone more and more.

Will humanity remember him in literature? Will his fame pass? We cannot affirm, but we can doubt! In the cycle of Rougon-Macquart there are powerful volumes, as "Germinal" or "La Débâcle." But in general, that which Zola's natural talent made for his immortality was spoiled by a liking for dirty realism and his filthy language. Literature cannot use such expressions of which even

peasants are ashamed. The real truth, if the question is about vicious people, can be attained by other means, by probable reproduction of the state of their souls, thoughts, deeds, finally by the run of their conversation, but not by verbal quotation of their swearings and most horrid words. As in the choice of pictures, so in the choice of expression, exist certain measures, pointed at by reason and good taste. Zola overstepped it to such a degree ("La Terre") to which nobody yet dared to approach. Monsters are killed because they are monsters. A book which is the cause of disgust must be abandoned. It is the natural order of things. From old production as of universal literature survive the forgetfulness of the rough productions, destined to excite laughter (Aristophanes, Rabelais, etc.), or lascivious things, but written with an elegance (Boccaccio). Not one book written in order to excite nausea outlived.

Zola, for the sake of the renown caused by his works, for the sake of the scandal produced by every one of his volumes, killed his future. On account of that happened a strange thing: it happened that he, a man writing according to a conceived plan, writing with deliberation, cold and possessing his subjects as very few writers are, created good things only when he had the least opportunity to realize his plans, doctrines, means,—in a word, when he dominated the subject the least and was dominated by the subject most.

Such was the case in "Germinal" and "La Débâcle." The immensity of socialism and the immensity of the war simply crushed Zola with all his mental apparatus. His doctrines became very small in the presence of such dimensions, and hardly any one hears of them in the noise of the deluge, overflowing the mine and in the thundering of Prussian cannons; only talent remained. Therefore in both

those books there are pages worthy of Dante. Quite a different thing happened with "Docteur Pascal." Being the last volume of the cycle, it was bound to be the last deduction, from the whole work the synthesis of the doctrine, the belfry of the whole building. Consequently in this volume Zola speaks more about doctrine than in any other previous volume; as the doctrine is bad, wicked, and false, therefore "Docteur Pascal" is the worst and most tedious book of all the cycle of Rougon-Macquart. It is a series of empty leaves on which tediousness is hand in hand with lack of moral sense, it is a pale picture full of falsehood—such is "Le Docteur Pascal." Zola wishes to have him an honest man. He is the outcast of the family Rougon-Macquart. In heredity there happens such lucky degenerations; the doctor knows about it, he considers himself as a happy exception, and it is for him a source of continuous inward pleas-

ure. In the mean while, he loves people, serves them and sells them his medicine, which cures all possible disease. He is a sweet sage, who studies life, therefore he gathers "human documents," builds laboriously the genealogical tree of the family of Rougon-Macquart, whose descendant he is himself, and on the strength of his observations he comes to the same conclusion as Zola. To which? It is difficult to answer the question; but here it is more or less: if any one is not well, usually he is sick and that heredity exists, but mothers and fathers who come from other families can bring into the blood of children new elements; in that way heredity can be modified to such a degree that strictly speaking it does not exist.

To all that Doctor Pascal is a positivist. He does not wish to affirm anything, but he does affirm that actual state of science does not permit of any further deductions than those

which on the strength of the observation of known facts can be deducted, therefore one must hold them, and neglect the others. In that respect his prejudices do not tell us anything more than newspaper articles, written by young positivists. For the people, who are rushing forward, for those spiritual needs, as strong as thirst and hunger, by which the man felt such ideas as God, faith, immortality, the doctor has only a smile of commiseration. And one might wonder at him a little bit. One could understand him better if he did not acknowledge the possibility of the disentangling of different abstract questions, but he affirms that the necessity does not exist—by which he sins against evidence, because such a necessity exists, not further than under his own roof, in the person of his niece. This young person, brought up in his principles, at once loses the ground under her feet. In her soul arose more questions than the doctor was

able to answer. And from this moment began a drama for both of them.

"I cannot be satisfied with that," cries the niece, "I am choking; I must know something, and if your science cannot satisfy my necessity, I am going there where they will not only tranquillize me, not only explain everything to me, but also will make me happy—I am going to church."

And she went. The roads of master and pupil diverge more and more. The pupil comes to the conclusion that the science which is only a slipknot on the human neck is positively bad and that it would be a great merit before God to burn those old papers in which the doctor writes his observations. And the drama becomes stronger, because notwithstanding the doctor being sixty years old, and Clotilde is only twenty years old, these two people are in love, not only as relations are in love, but as a man and woman love each other.

This love adds more bitterness to the fight and prompts the catastrophe.

On a certain night the doctor detected the niece in a criminal deed. She opened his desk, took out his papers, and she was ready to burn them up! They began to fight! Beautiful picture! Both are in nightgowns—they pull each other's hair, they scratch each other. He is stronger than she; although he has bitten her, she feels a certain pleasure in that experiment on her maiden skin of the strength of a man. In that is the whole of Zola. But let us listen, because the decisive moment approaches. The doctor himself, after having rested a while, announces it solemnly. The reader shivers. Will the doctor by the strength of his genius tear the sky and show to her emptiness beyond the stars? Or will he by the strength of his eloquence ruin her church, her creed, her ecstasies, her hopes?

In the quietness the doctor's low voice is heard:

"I did not wish to show you that, but it cannot last any longer—the time has come. Give me the genealogical tree of Rougon-Macquart."

Yes! The genealogical tree of Rougon-Macquart! The reading of it begins: There was one Adelaïde Fouqué, who married Rougon, Macquart's friend. Rougon had Eugene Rougon, also Pascal Rougon, also Aristides, also Sidonie, also Martha. Aristides had Maxyme, Clotilde, Victor, and Maxyme had Charles, and so on to the end; but Sidonie had a daughter Angelle, and Martha, who married Mouret, who was from Macquart's family, had three children, etc.

The night passes, pales, but the reading continues. After Rougons come Macquarts, then the generations of both families. One name follows another. They appear bad,

good, indifferent, all classes, from ministers, bankers, great merchants, to simple soldiers or rascals without any professions—finally the doctor stops reading—and looking with his eyes of savant at his niece, asks: "Well, what now?"

And beautiful Clotilde throws herself into his arms, crying: "*Vicisti! Vicisti!*"

And her God, her church, her flight toward ideals, her spiritual needs disappeared, turned into ashes.

Why? On the ground of what final conclusion? For what good reason? What could there be in the tree that convinced her? How could it produce any other impression than that of tediousness? Why did she not ask the question, which surely must have come to the lips of the reader: "And what then?"—it is unknown! I never noticed that any other author could deduct from such a trifling and insignificant cause such great and immediate

consequences. It is as much of an astonishment as if Zola should order Clotilde's faith and principles to be turned into ashes after the doctor has read to her an almanac, time-table, bill of fare, or catalogue of some museum. The freedom surpasses here all possible limits and becomes absolutely incomprehensible. The reader asks whether the author deceives himself or if he wishes to throw some dust into the eyes of the public? And this climax of the novel is at the same time the downfall of all doctrine. Clotilde ought to have answered as follows:

"Your theory has no connection with my faith in God and the Church. Your heredity is so *loose* and on the strength of it one can be so much, *everything*, that it becomes *nothing*—therefore the consequences which you deduct from it also are based upon nothing. Nana, according to you, is a street-walker, and Angelle is a saint; the priest Mouret is an

ascetic, Jacques Lantier a murderer, and all that on account of great-grandmother Adelaïde! But I tell you with more real probability, that the good are good because they have my faith, because they believe in responsibility and immortality of the soul, and the bad are bad because they do not believe in anything. How can you prove that the cause of good and bad is in great-grandmother Adelaïde Fouqué? Perhaps you will tell me that it is so because it is so; but I can tell you that the faith and responsibility were for centuries a stopper for evil, and you cannot deny it, if you wish to be a positivist, because those are material facts. In a word, I have objective proofs where you have your personal views, and if it is so, then leave my faith and throw your fancy into the fire."

But Clotilde does not answer anything like this. On the contrary, she eats at once the apple from this tree—passes soul and body

into the doctor's camp, and she does it because Zola wishes to have it that way. There is no other reason for it and cannot be.

Had she done that on account of love for the doctor, had this reason, which in a woman can play such an important part, acted on her, everything would be easy to understand. But there is no such thing! In that case what would become of all of Zola's doctrine? It acts exclusively upon Clotilde, the author wishes to have only such a reason. And it happens as he wishes, but at the cost of logic and common sense. Since that time everything would be permitted: one will be allowed to persuade the reader that the man who is not loved makes a woman fall in love with him by means of showing her a price list of butter or candies. To such results a great and true talent is conducted by a doctrine.

This doctrine conducts also to perfect atrophy of moral sense. This heredity is a

wall in which one can make as many windows as one pleases. The doctor is such a window. He considers himself as being degenerated from the nervousness of the family; it means that he is a normal man, and as such he would transmit his health to his descendants. Clotilde thinks also that it would be quite a good idea, and as they are in love, consequently they take possession of each other, and they do it as did people in the epoch of caverns. Zola considered it a perfectly natural thing, Doctor Pascal thinks the same, and as Clotilde passed into his camp, she did not make any opposition. This appears a little strange. Clotilde was religious only a little while ago! Her youth and lack of experience do not justify her either. Even at eight years, girls have some sentiment of modesty. At twenty years a young girl always knows what she is doing, and she cannot be called a sacrifice, and if she departs from the sentiment of modesty

she does it either by love, which makes noble the raptures, or because she does it by the act of duty, but at the same time she wishes to be herself a legitimated duty. Even if a woman is an irreligious being and she refuses to be blessed by religion, she can desire that her sentiment were legitimated. The priest or *monsieur le maire?* Clotilde, who loves Doctor Pascal, does not ask for anything. Marriage, accomplished by a *maire*, seems to her to be a secondary thing. Here also one cannot understand her, because a true love would wish to make the knot lasting. That which really happens is quite different, in the novel, that first separation is the end of the relation between them. Were they married at least by a *maire*, they would have remained even in the separation husband and wife, they would not cease to belong to each other; but as they were not married, therefore at the moment of her departure he became unmarried, as for-

merly, Doctor Pascal, she—seduced Clotilde. Even during their life in common there happened a thousand disagreeable incidents for both of them. One time, for instance, Clotilde rushes crying and red, and when the frightened doctor asks her what is the matter, she answers:

"Ah, those women! Walking in the shade, I closed my parasol and I hurt a child. In that moment all of the women fell on me and began to shout such things! Ah, it was so dreadful! that I shall never have any children, that such things are not for such a dishcloth as I! and many other things which I cannot repeat; I do not wish to repeat them; I do not even understand them."

Her breast was moved by sobbings; he became pale, and seizing her by the shoulders, commenced to cover her face with kisses, saying:

"It's my fault, you suffer through me!

Listen, we will go very far from here, where no one knows us, where everybody will greet you and you shall be happy."

Only one thing does not come to their minds: to be married. When Pascal's mother speaks to him about it, they do not listen to it. It is not dictated to her by woman's modesty, to him by the care for her and the desire to shelter her from insults. Why? Because Zola likes it that way.

But perhaps he cares to show what tragical results are produced by illegitimate marriages? Not at all. He shares the doctor's and Clotilde's opinion. Were they married, there would be no drama, and the author wishes to have it. That is the reason.

Then comes the doctor's insolvency. One must separate. This separation becomes the misfortune of their lives: the doctor will die of it. Both feel that it will not be the end, they do not wish it—and they do not think of

any means which would forever affirm their mutual dependence and change the departure for only a momentary separation, but not for eternal farewells: and they do not marry.

They did not have any religion, therefore they did not wish for any priest; it is logical, but why did they not wish for a *maire?* The question remains without an answer.

Here, besides lack of moral sense, there is something more, the lack of common sense. The novel is not only immoral, but at the same time it is a bad shanty, built of rotten pieces of wood, not holding together, unable to suffer any contact with logic and common sense. In such mud of nonsense even the talent was drowned.

One thing remains: the poison flows as usual in the soul of the reader, the mind became familiar with the evil and ceased to despise it. The poison licks, spoils the simplicity of the soul, moral impressions and that

sense of conscience which distinguishes the bad from the good.

The doctor dies from languishing after Clotilde. She comes back under the old roof and takes care of the child. Nothing of that which the doctor sowed in her soul had perished. On the contrary, everything grows very well. She loved the life, she also loves it now, she is resigned to it entirely; not through resignation but because she acknowledges it—and the more she thinks of it, rocking in her lap the child without a name, she acknowledges more. Such is the end of Rougon-Macquarts.

But such an end is a new surprise. Here we have before us nineteen volumes, and in those volumes, as Zola himself says, *tant de boue, tant de larmes. C'était à se demander si d'un coup de foudre, il n'aurait pas mieux valu balayer cette fourmilière gatée et miserable.* And it is true! Any one who will read those vol-

umes comes to the conclusion that life is a blindly mechanical and exasperating process, in which one must take part because one cannot avoid it. There is more mud in it than green grass, more corruption than wholesomeness, more odor of corpses than perfume of flowers, more illness, more madness, and more crime than health and virtue. It is a Gehenna not only dreadful but also abominable. The hair rises on the head, and in the mean while the mouth is wet and the question comes, will it not be better that a thunderbolt destroyed *cette fourmilière gatée et miserable ?*

There cannot be any other conclusion, because any other would be a madman's mental aberration, the breaking of the rules of sense and logic. And now do you know how the cycle of these novels really ended? By a hymn in the worship of life.

Here one's hands drop! It will be useless work to show again that the author comes to a

conclusion which is illogical with his whole work. God bless him! But he must not be astonished if he is abandoned by his pupils. The people must think according to rules of logic. And as in the mean while they must live, consequently they wish to get some consolation in this life. Masters of Zola's kind gave them only corruption, chaos, disgust for life, and despair. Their rationalism cannot prove anything else, and if it did, it would be with too much zeal, it would overstep the limits. To-day the suffocated need some pure air, the doubting ones some hope, tormented by uneasiness, some quietude, therefore they are doing well when they turn therefrom where the hope and peace flow, there where they bless them and where they say to them as to Lazarus: *Tolle grabatum tuum et ambula.*

By this one can explain to-day's evolutions, whose waves flow to all parts of the world.

According to my opinion, poetry as well as

novels must pass through it—even more: they must quicken it and make it more powerful. One cannot continue any longer that way! On an exhausted field, only weeds grow. The novel must strengthen the life, not shake it; make it nobler, not soil it; carry good "news," and not bad. It does not matter whether this which I say here please any one or not, because I believe that I feel the great and urgent need of the human soul, which cries for a change.

PART THIRD

Part Third.

WHOSE FAULT?

A Dramatic Picture in One Act.

CHARACTERS: Jadwiga Karlowiecka.
Leon—A Painter.
A Servant.

In the House of Jadwiga Karlowiecka.

SCENE I.

Servant.—The lady will be here in a minute.

Leon (alone).—I cannot overcome my emotion nor can I tranquillize the throbbing of my heart. Three times have I touched the bell and three times have I wished to retreat. I am troubled. Why does she wish to see me! (Takes out a letter). "Be so kind as to come

to see me on a very important matter. In spite of all that has happened I hope you will not refuse to grant the request of—a woman. Jadwiga Karlowiecka." Perhaps it would have been better and more honest to have left this letter without an answer. But I see that I have cheated myself in thinking that nothing will happen, and that it would be brutal of me not to come. The soul — poor moth—flies toward the light which may burn, but can neither warm nor light it. What has attracted me here? Is it love? Can I answer the question as to whether I still love this woman—so unlike my pure sweetheart of former years—this half lioness, whose reputation has been torn to shreds by human tongues? No! It is rather some painful curiosity which has attracted me here. It is the unmeasurable grief which in two years I have been unable to appease, that desire for a full explanation: "Why?" has been repeated over and over

during my sleepless nights. And then let her see this emaciated face—let her look from nearby on that broken life. I could not resist. Such vengeance is my right. I shall be proud enough to set my teeth to stifle all groans. What is done cannot be undone, and I swear to myself that it shall never be done again.

Scene II.

Jadwiga (entering).—You must excuse me for keeping you waiting.

Leon.—It is my fault. I came too early, although I tried to be exact.

Jadwiga.—No, I must be frank and tell you how it happened. In former times we were such dear friends, and then we have not seen each other for two years. I asked you to come, but I was not sure that you would grant my request, therefore—when the bell rang—after two years—(smiling) I needed a few mo-

ments to overcome the emotion. I thought it was necessary for both of us.

Leon.—I am calm, madam, and I listen to you.

Jadwiga.—I wished also that we should greet each other like people who have forgotten about the past, who know that it will not return, and to be at once on the footing of good friends; I do not dare say like brother and sisters. Therefore, Sir, here is my hand, and now be seated and tell me if you accept my proposition.

Leon.—I leave that to you.

Jadwiga.—If that is so, then I must tell you that such an agreement, based on mutual well-wishing, excludes excessive solemnity. We must be natural, sincere, and frank.

Leon.—Frankly speaking, it will be a little difficult, still.

Jadwiga.—It would be difficult if there were no condition: "Not a word about the past!"

If we both keep to this, a good understanding will return of itself and in time we may become good friends. What have you been doing during the past two years?

Leon.—I have been pushing the wheelbarrow of life, as all mortals do. Every Monday I have thought that in a week there would be another Monday. I assure you that there is some distraction in seeing the days spin out like a thread from a ball, and how everything that has happened goes away and gradually disappears, like a migratory bird.

Jadwiga.—Such distraction is good for those to whom another bird comes with a song of the future. But otherwise——

Leon.—Otherwise it is perhaps better to think that when all threads will be spun out from the ball, there will remain nothing. Sometimes the reminiscences are very painful. Happily time dulls their edge, or they would prick like thorns.

Jadwiga.—Or would burn like fire.

Leon.—All-wise Nature gives us some remedy for it. A fire which is not replenished must die, and the ashes do not burn.

Jadwiga.—We are unwillingly chasing a bird which has flown away. Enough of it! Have you painted much lately?

Leon.—I do nothing else. I think and I paint. It is true that until now my thoughts have produced nothing, and I have painted a very little. But it was not my fault. Better be good enough to tell me what has caused you to call me here.

Jadwiga.—It will come by itself. In the first place, I should be justified in so doing by a desire to see a great man. You are now an artist whose fame is world-wide.

Leon.—I would appear to be guilty of conceit, but I honestly think that I was not the last pawn on the chessboard in the drawing-room, and that is perhaps the reason why I

have been thinking during the past two years and could not understand why I was thrown aside like a common pawn.

Jadwiga.—And where is our agreement?

Leon.—It is a story told in a subjective way by a third person. According to the second clause in our agreement—"sincerity"—I must add that I am already accustomed to my wheelbarrow.

Jadwiga.—We must not speak about it.

Leon.—I warn you—it will be difficult.

Jadwiga.—It should be more easy for you. You, the elect of art and the pride of the whole nation, and in the mean while its spoiled child—you can live with your whole soul in the present and in the future. From the flowers strewn under one's feet, one can always chose the most beautiful, or not choose at all, but always tread upon them.

Leon.—If one does not stumble.

Jadwiga.—No! To advance toward immortality.

Leon.—Longing for death while on the road.

Jadwiga.—It is an excess of pessimism for a man who says that he is accustomed to his wheelbarrow.

Leon.—I wish only to show the other side of the medal. And then you must remember, madam, that to-day pessimism is the mode. You must not take my words too seriously. In a drawing-room one strings the words of a conversation like beads on a thread—it is only play.

Jadwiga.—Let us play then (after a while). Ah! How many changes! I cannot comprehend. If two years ago some one had told me that to-day we would sit far apart from each other, and chat as we do, and look at each other with watchful curiosity, like two people perfectly strange to each other, I could not have believed. Truly, it is utterly amusing!

Leon.—It would not be proper for me to remind you of our agreement.

Jadwiga.—But nevertheless you do remind me. Thank you. My nerves are guilty for this melancholy turn of the conversation. But I feel it is not becoming to me. But pray be assured that I shall not again enter that thorny path, if for no other reason than that of self-love. I, too, amuse myself as best I can, and I return to my reminiscences only when wearied. For several days I have been greatly wearied.

Leon.—Is that the reason why you asked me to come here? I am afraid that I will not be an abundant source of distraction. My disposition is not very gay, and I am too proud, too honest, and—too costly to become a plaything. Permit me to leave you.

Jadwiga.—You must forgive me. I did not mean to offend you. Without going back to the past, I can tell you that pride is your

greatest fault, and if it were not for that pride, many sad things would not have happened.

Leon.—Without going back to the past, I must answer you that it is the only sail which remained on my boat. The others are torn by the wind of life. If it were not for this last sail, I should have sunk long ago.

Jadwiga.—And I think that it was a rock on which has been wrecked not only your boat—but no matter! So much the worse for those who believed in fair weather and a smooth sea. We must at least prevent ourselves from now being carried where we do not wish to sail.

Leon.—And where the sandy banks are sure——

Jadwiga.—What strange conversation! It seems to me that it is a net, in which the truth lies at the bottom, struggling in vain to break the meshes. But perhaps it is better so.

Leon.—Much better. Madam, you have

written me that you wished to see me on an important matter. I am listening.

Jadwiga.—Yes (smiling). It is permitted a society woman to have her fancies and desires —sometimes inexplicable fancies, and it is not permitted a gentleman to refuse them. Well, then, I wished to see my portrait, painted by the great painter Leon. Would you be willing to paint it?

Leon.—Madam——

Jadwiga.—Ah! the lion's forehead frowns, as if my wish were an insult.

Leon.—I think that the fancies of a society woman are indeed inexplicable, and do not look like jokes at all.

Jadwiga.—This question has two sides! The first is the formal side and it shows itself thus: Mme. Jadwiga Karlowiecka most earnestly asks the great painter Leon to make her portrait. That is all! The painter Leon, who, it is known, paints lots of portraits, has

no good reason for refusing. The painter cannot refuse to make a portrait any more than a physician can refuse his assistance. There remains the other side—the past. But we agreed that it is a forbidden subject.

Leon.—Permit me, madam——

Jadwiga (interrupting).—Pray, not a word about the past. (She laughs.) Ah, my woman's diplomacy knows how to tie a knot and draw tight the ends of it. How your embarrassment pleases me. But there is something quite different. Let us suppose that I am a vain person, full of womanly self-love; full of petty jealousy and envy. Well, you have painted the portrait of Mme. Zofia and of Helena. I wish to have mine also. One does not refuse the women such things. Reports of your fame come to me from all sides. I hear all around me the words: "Our great painter—our master!" Society lionizes you. God knows how many breasts sigh for you.

Every one can have your works, every one can approach you, see you, be proud of you. I alone, your playmate, your old friend, I alone am as though excommunicated.

Leon.—But Mme. Jadwiga——

Jadwiga.—Ah, you have called me by my name. I thank you and beg your pardon. It is the self-love of a woman, nothing more. It is my nerves. Do not be frightened. You see how dangerous it is to irritate me. After one of my moods I am unbearable. I will give you three days to think the matter over. If you do not wish to come, write me then (she laughs sadly). Only I warn you, that if you will neither come nor write me, I will tell every one that you are afraid of me, and so I will satisfy my self-love. In the mean time, for the sake of my nerves, you must not tell, me that you refuse my request. I am a little bit ill—consequently capricious.

Leon.—In three days you shall have my

answer (rising), and now I will say good-bye.

Jadwiga.—Wait a moment. This is not so easy as you think. Truly, I would think you are afraid of me. It is true that they say I am a coquette, a flirt. I know they talk very badly about me. Besides we are good acquaintances, who have not seen each other for two years. Let us then talk a little. Let me take your hat. Yes, that is it! Now let us talk. I am sure we may become friends again. As for me at least—what do you intend to do in the future besides painting my portrait?

Leon.—The conversation about me would not last long. Let us take another more interesting subject. You had better talk about yourself—about your life, your family.

Jadwiga.—As for my husband, he is, as usual, in Chantilly. My mother is dead!

Poor mama! She was so fond of you—she loved you very much (after a pause). In fact, as you see, I have grown old and changed greatly.

Leon.—At your age the words "I have grown old" are only a daring challenge thrown by a woman who is not afraid that she would be believed.

Jadwiga.—I am twenty-three years old, so I am not talking about age in years, but age in morals. I feel that to-day I am not like that Jadwiga of Kalinowice whom you used to know so well. Good gracious! when I think to-day of that confidence and faith in life—those girlish illusions—the illusions of a young person who wished to be happy and make others happy, that enthusiasm for everything good and noble! where has all that gone—where has it disappeared? And to think that I was—well, an honest wild-flower—and to-day——

Leon.—And to-day a society woman.

Jadwiga.—To-day, when I see such a sceptical smile as I saw a few moments ago on your lips, it seems to me that I am ridiculous —very often so—even always when I sit at some ideal embroidery and when I begin to work at some withered flowers on the forgotten, despised canvas of the past. It is a curious and old fashion from times when faithfulness was not looked seriously on, and people sang of Filon.

Leon.—At that moment you were speaking according to the latest mode.

Jadwiga.—Shall I weep, or try to tie the broken thread? Well, the times change. I can assure you that I have some better moments, during which I laugh heartily at everything (handing him a cigarette). Do you smoke?

Leon.—No, madam.

Jadwiga.—I do. It is also a distraction.

Sometimes I hunt *par force* with my husband, I read Zola's novels, I make calls and receive visits, and every morning I ponder as to the best way to kill time. Sometimes I succeed—sometimes not. Apropos, you know my husband, do you not?

Leon.—I used to know him.

Jadwiga.—He is very fond of hunting, but only *par force*. We never hunt otherwise.

Leon.—Let us be frank. You had better drop that false tone.

Jadwiga.—On the contrary. In our days we need impressions which stir our nerves. The latest music, like life itself, is full of dissonances. I do not wish to say that I am unhappy with my husband. It is true that he is always in Chantilly, and I see him only once in three months, but it proves, on the other hand, that he has confidence in me. Is it not true?

Leon.—I do not know, and I do not wish to

decide about it. But before all, I should not know anything about it.

Jadwiga.—It seemed to me that you ought to know. Pray believe that I would not be as frank with any one else as I am with you. And then, I do not complain. I try to surround myself with youths who pretend they are in love with me. There is not a pennyworth of truth in all of it—they all lie, but the form of the lie is beautiful because they are all well-bred people. The Count Skorzewski visits me also—you must have heard of him, I am sure. I recommend him to you as a model for Adonis. Ha! ha! You do not recognize the wild-flower of Kalinowice?

Leon.—No, I do not recognize it.

Jadwiga.—No! But the life flower.

Leon.—As a joke——

Jadwiga.—At which one cannot laugh always. If our century was not sceptical I should think myself wild, romantic, trying to

drown despair. But the romantic times have passed away, therefore, frankly speaking, I only try to fill up a great nothing. I also spin out my ball, although not always with pleasure. Sometimes I seem to myself so miserable and my life so empty that I rush to my prayer-desk, left by my mother. I weep, I pray—and then I laugh again at my prayers and tears. And so it goes on—round and round. Do you know that they gossip about me?

Leon.—I do not listen to the gossip.

Jadwiga.—How good you are! I will tell you then why they gossip. A missionary asked a negro what, according to his ideas, constituted evil? The negro thought a while, and then said: "Evil is if some one were to steal my wife." "And what is good?" asked the missionary. "Good is when I steal from some one else." My husband's friends are of the negro's opinion. Every one of them

would like to do a good deed and steal some one's wife.

Leon.—It depends on the wife.

Jadwiga.—Yes, but every word and every look is a bait. If the fish passes the bait, the fisherman's self-love is wounded. That is why they slander me (after a while). You great people—you are filled with simplicity. Then you think it depends on the wife?

Leon.—Yes, it does.

Jadwiga.—*Morbleu!* as my husband says, and if the wife is weary?

Leon.—I bid you good-bye.

Jadwiga.—Why? Does what I say offend you?

Leon.—It does more than offend me. It hurts me. Maybe it will seem strange to you, but here in my breast I am carrying some flowers—although they are withered—dead for a long time. But they are dear to me and just now you are trampling on them.

Jadwiga (with an outburst).—Oh, if those flowers had not died!

Leon.—They are in my heart—and there is a tomb. Let us leave the past alone.

Jadwiga.—Yes, you are right. Leave it alone. What is dead cannot be resuscitated. I wish to speak calmly. Look at my situation. What defends me—what helps me—what protects me? I am a young woman, and it seems not ugly, and therefore no one approaches me with an honest, simple heart, but with a trap in eyes and mouth. What opposition have I to make? Weariness? Grief? Emptiness? In life even a man must lean on something, and I, a feeble woman, I am like a boat without a helm, without oar and without light toward which to sail. And the heart longs for happiness. You must understand that a woman must be loved and must love some one in the world, and if she lacks true love

she seizes the first pretext of it—the first shadow.

Leon (with animation).—Poor thing.

Jadwiga.—Do not smile in that ironical way. Be better, be less severe with me. I do not even have any one to complain, and that is why I do not drive away Count Skorzewski. I detest his beauty, I despise his perverse mind, but I do not drive him away because he is a skilful actor, and because when I see his acting it awakens in me the echo of former days. (After a while.) How shall I fill my life? Study? Art? Even if I loved them, they would not love me for they are not living things. No, truly now! They showed me no duties, no aims, no foundations. Everything on which other women live—everything which constitutes their happiness, sincere sorrow, strength, tears, and smiles, is barred from me. Morally I have nothing to live on—like a beggar. I have no one to live for—like an

orphan. I am not permitted to yearn for a noble and quiet life; I may only nurture myself with grief and defend myself with faded, dead flowers, and remembrances of former pure, honest, and loving Jadwinia. Ah! again I break my promise, our agreement. I must beg your pardon.

Leon.—Mme. Jadwiga, both our lives are tangled. When I was most unhappy, when everything abandoned me, there remained with me the love of an idea—love of the country.

Jadwiga (thoughtfully).—The love of an idea—country. There is something great in that. You, by each of your pictures, increase the glory of the country and make famous its name, but I—what can I do?

Leon.—The one who lives simply, suffers and quietly fulfils his duties—he also serves his country.

Jadwiga.—What duties? Give them to me.

For every-day life one great, ideal love is not enough for me. I am a woman! I must cling to something—twine about something like the ivy—otherwise truly, sir, I should fall to the ground and be trampled upon (with an outburst). If I could only respect him!

Leon.—But, madam, you should remember to whom you are speaking of such matters. I have no right to know of your family affairs.

Jadwiga.—No. You have not the right, nor are you obliged nor willing. Only friendly hearts know affliction—only those who suffer can sympathize. You—looking into the stars—you pass human misery and do not turn your head even when that misery shouts to you. It is your fault.

Leon.—My fault!

Jadwiga.—Do not frown, and do not close your mouth (beseechingly). I do not reproach you for anything. I have forgiven you long ago, and now I, the giddy woman whom the

world always sees merry and laughing—I am really so miserable that I have even no strength left for hatred.

Leon.—Madam! Enough! I have listened to your story—do not make me tell you mine. If you should hear it a still heavier burden would fall on your shoulders.

Jadwiga.—No, no. We could be happy and we are not. It is the fault of both. How dreadful to think that we separated on account of almost nothing—on account of one thoughtless word—and we separated forever (she covers her face with her hands), without hope.

Leon.—That word was nothing for you, but I remember it still with brain and heart. I was not then what I am to-day. I was poor, unknown, and you were my whole future, my aim, my riches.

Jadwiga.—Oh, Mr. Leon, Mr. Leon, what a golden dream it was!

Leon.—But I was proud because I knew

that there was in me the divine spark. I loved you dearly, I trusted you—and nothing disturbed the security around me. Suddenly one evening Mr. Karlowiecki appeared, and already the second evening you told me that you gave more than you received.

Jadwiga.—Mr. Leon!

Leon.—What was your reason for giving that wound to my proud misery? You could not already have loved that man, but as soon as he appeared you humiliated me. There are wrongs which a man cannot bear with dignity—so those words were the last I heard from you.

Jadwiga.—Truly. When I listen to you I must keep a strong hand on my senses. As soon as the other appeared you gave vent to a jealous outburst. I said that I gave more than I took, and you thought I spoke of money and not sentiment? Then you could suspect that I was capable of throwing my

riches in your face—you thought I was capable of that? That is why he could not forgive! That is why he went away! That is why he has made his life and mine miserable!

Leon.—It is too late to talk about that. Too late! You knew then and you know to-day that I could not have understood your words differently. The other man was of your own world—the world of which you were so fond that sometimes it seemed to me that you cherished it more than our love. At times when I so doubted you did not calm me. You were amused by the thought that you were stretching out to me a hand of courtly condescension, and I, in an excess of humiliation, I cast aside that hand. You knew it then, and you know it to-day!

Jadwiga.—I know it to-day, but I did not know then. I swear it by my mother's memory. But suppose it was even as you say. Why could you not forgive me? Oh God!

truly one might go mad. And there was neither time nor opportunity to explain. He went away and never returned. What could I do? When you became angry, when you shut yourself up within yourself, grief pressed my heart. I am ashamed even to-day to say this. I looked into your eyes like a dog which wishes to disarm the anger of his master by humility. In vain! Then I thought, when taking leave, I will shake hands with him so honestly and cordially that he will finally understand and will forgive me. While parting my hand dropped, for you only saluted me from afar. I swallowed my tears and humiliation. I thought still he will return to-morrow. A day passed, two days, a week, a month.

Leon.—Then you married.

Jadwiga (passionately). — Yes. Useless tears and time made me think it was forever —therefore anger grew in my heart—anger

and a desire for vengeance on you and myself. I wished to be lost, for I said to myself, "That man does not love me, has never loved me." I married in the same spirit that I should have thrown myself through a window—from despair—because, as I still believe, you never loved me.

Leon.—Madam, do not blaspheme. Do not provoke me. I never loved you! Look at the precipice which you have opened before me—count the sleepless nights during which I tore my breast with grief — count the days on which I called to you as from a cross—look at this thin face, at these trembling hands, and repeat once more that I never loved you! What has become of me? What is life for me without you? To-day my head is crowned with laurels and here in my breast is emptiness and exhaustless sorrow, and tears not wept—and in my eyes eternal darkness. Oh, by the living God, I loved you with every

drop of my blood, with my every thought—and I was not able to love differently. Having lost you, I lost everything—my star, my strength, faith, hope, desire for life, and not only happiness, but the capacity for happiness. Woman, do you understand the dreadful meaning of those words? I have lost the capacity for happiness. I have not loved you! Oh, despair! God alone knows for how many nights I have cried to Him: "Lord, take my talent, take my fame, take my life, but return to me for only one moment my Jadwiga as she was of old!"

Jadwiga.—Enough! Lord, what is the matter with me? Leon, I love you!

Leon.—Oh, my dearest! (He presses her to his breast. A moment of silence.)

Jadwiga.—I have found you. I loved you always. Ah! how miserable I was without you! With love for you I defended myself from all temptations. You do not know it,

but I used to see you. It caused me grief and joy. I could not live any longer without you, and I asked you to come—I did it purposely. If you had not come, something dreadful would have happened. Now we shall never separate. We shall never be angry—is it not so? (A moment of silence.)

Leon (as though awakening from slumber). —Madam, you must pardon me—I mistook the present for the past, and permitted myself to be carried away by an illusion. Pardon me!

Jadwiga.—Leon, what do you mean?

Leon (earnestly).—I forgot for a moment that you are the wife of another.

Jadwiga.—Oh, you are always honest and loyal. No, there shall be no guilty love between us. I know you, my great, my noble Leon. The hand which I stretch out to you is pure—I swear it to you. You must also forgive me a moment of forgetfulness. Here

I stand before you, and say to you: I will not be yours until I am free. But I know that my husband will consent to a divorce. I will leave him all my fortune, and because I formerly offended your pride—it was my fault—yes, my own fault—you shall take me poor, in this dress only—will it suit you? Then I will become your lawful wife. Oh, my God! and I shall be honest, loving, and loved. I have longed for it with my whole soul. I cannot think of our future without tears. God is so good! When you return from your studio at night, you will come neither to an empty room nor to grief. I will share your every joy, your every sorrow—I will divide with you the last piece of bread. Truly, I cannot speak for tears. Look, I am not so bad, but I have been so miserable. I loved you always. Ah, you bad boy, if it were not for your pride we should have been happy long ago. Tell me once more that you love me—that you

consent to take me when I shall be free—is it not so, Leon?

Leon.—No, madam!

Jadwiga.—Leon, my dearest, wait! Perhaps I have not heard well. For I cannot comprehend that when I am hanging over a precipice of despair, when I seize the edge with my hands, you, instead of helping me—you place your feet on my fingers! No! it is impossible. You are too good for that! Do not thrust me away. My life now would be still worse. I have nothing in the world but you, and with you I lost happiness—not alone happiness but everything in me which is good—which cries for a quiet and saintly life. For now it would be forever. But you do not know how happy you yourself will be when you will have forgiven me and rescued me. You have loved me, have you not? You have said it yourself. I have heard it. Now I stretch out my

hands to you like a drowning person—rescue me!

Leon.—We must finish this mutual torture. Madam, I am a weak man. I would give way if—but I wish to spare you—if not for the fact that my sore and dead heart cannot give you anything but tears and pity.

Jadwiga.—You do not love me!

Leon.—I have no strength for happiness. I did love you. My heart throbbed for a moment with a recollection as of a dead person. But the other one is dead. I tell you this, madam, in tears and torture. I do not love you.

Jadwiga.—Leon!

Leon.—Have pity on me and forgive me.

Jadwiga.—You do not love me!

Leon.—What is dead cannot be resuscitated. Farewell.

Jadwiga (after a while).—Very well. If you think you have humiliated me enough,

trampled on me, and are sufficiently avenged, leave me then (to Leon, who wishes to withdraw). No! no! Remain. Have pity on me.

Leon.—May God have pity on us both. (He goes away.)

Jadwiga.—It is done!

A Servant (entering).—Count Skorzewski!

Jadwiga.—Ha! Show him in! Show him in! Ha! ha! ha!

PART FOURTH

Part Fourth.

THE VERDICT.

APOLLO and Hermes once met toward evening on the rocks of Pnyx and were looking on Athens.

The evening was charming; the sun was already rolled from the Archipelago toward the Ionian Sea and had begun to slowly sink its radiant head in the water which shone turquoise-like. But the summits of Hymettus and Pentelicus were yet beaming as if melted gold had been poured over them, and the evening twilight was in the sky. In its light the whole Acropolis was drowned. The white walls of Propyleos, Parthenon, and Erechtheum seemed pink and as light as though the marble

had lost all its weight, or as if they were apparitions of a dream. The point of the spear of the gigantic Athena Promathos shone in the twilight like a lighted torch over Attica.

In the space hawks were flying toward their nests in the rocks, to pass the night.

The people returned in crowds from work in the fields. On the road to Piræus, mules and donkeys carried baskets full of olives and wine-grapes; behind them, in the red cloud of dust, marched herds of nannygoats, before each herd there was a white-bearded buck; on the sides, watchdogs; in the rear, shepherds, playing flutes of thin oat-stems.

Among the herds chariots slowly passed, carrying holly barlet, pulled by slow, heavy oxen; here and there passed a detachment of Hoplites or heavy armed troops, corseleted in copper, going to guard Piræus and Athens during the night.

Beneath, the city was full of animation.

Around the big fountain at Poikile, young girls in white dresses drew water, singing, laughing, or defending themselves from the boys, who threw over them fetters made of ivy and wild vine. The others, having already drawn the water, with the amphoræ poised on their shoulders, were turned homeward, light and graceful as immortal nymphs.

A light breeze blowing from the Attic valley carried to the ears of the two gods the sounds of laughter, singing, kissing. Apollo, in whose eyes nothing under the sun was fairer than a woman, turned to Hermes and said:

"O Maya's son, how beautiful are the Athenian women!"

"And virtuous too, my Radiant," answered Hermes; "they are under Pallas' tutelage."

The Silver-arrowed god became silent, and listening looked into space. In the mean while the twilight was slowly quenched, movement gradually stopped. Scythian slaves shut

the gates, and finally all became quiet. The Ambrosian night threw on the Acropolis, city, and environs, a dark veil embroidered with stars.

But the dusk did not last long. Soon from the Archipelago appeared the pale Selene, and began to sail like a silvery boat in the heavenly space. And then the walls of the Acropolis lighted again, only they beamed now with a pale-green light, and looked even more like a vision in a dream.

"One must agree," said Apollo, "that Athena has chosen for herself a charming home."

"Oh, she is very clever! Who could choose better?" answered Hermes. "Then Zeus has a fancy for her. If she wishes for anything she has only to caress his beard and immediately he calls her Tritogenia, dear daughter; he promises her everything and permits everything."

"Tritogenia bores me sometimes," grumbled Latona's son.

"Yes, I have noticed that she becomes very tedious," answered Hermes.

"Like an old peripatetic; and then she is virtuous to the ridiculous, like my sister Artemis."

"Or as her servants, the Athenian women."

The Radiant turned to the Argo-robber Mercury: "It is the second time you mention, as though purposely, the virtue of the Athenian women. Are they really so virtuous?"

"Fabulously so, O son of Latona!"

"Is it possible!" said Apollo. "Do you think that there is in town one woman who could resist me?"

"I do think so."

"Me, Apollo?"

"You, my Radiant."

"I, who should bewitch her with poetry and charm her with song and music!"

"You, my Radiant."

"If you were an honest god I would be willing to make a wager with you. But you, Argo-robber, if you should lose, you would disappear immediately with your sandals and caduceus."

"No, I will put one hand on the earth and another on the sea and swear by Hades. Such an oath is kept not only by me, but even by the members of the City Council in Athens."

"Oh, you exaggerate a little. Very well then! If you lose you must supply me in Trinachija with a herd of long-horned oxen, which you may steal where you please, as you did when you were only a boy, stealing my herds in Perea."

"Understood! And what shall I get if I win?"

"You may choose what you please."

"Listen, my Far-aiming archer," said Hermes. "I will be frank with you, which

occurs with me very seldom. Once, being sent on an errand by Zeus—I don't remember what errand—I was playing just over your Trinachija, and I perceived Lampecja, who, together with Featusa, watches your herds there. Since that time I have no peace. The thought about her is never absent from my mind. I love her and I sigh for her day and night. If I win, if in Athens there can be found a virtuous woman, strong enough to resist you, you shall give me Lampecja—I wish for nothing more."

The Silver-arrowed god began to shake his head.

"It's astonishing that love can nestle in the heart of a merchants-patron. I am willing to give you Lampecja—the more so because she is now quarrelling with Featusa. Speaking *intra parentheses*, both are in love with me—that is why they are quarrelling."

Great joy lighted up the Argo-robber's eyes.

"Then we lay the bet," said he. "One thing more, I shall choose the woman for you on whom you are to try your godly strength."

"Provided she is beautiful."

"She will be worthy of you."

"I am sure you know some one already."

"Yes, I do."

"A young girl, married, widow, or divorced?"

"Married, of course. Girl, widow, or divorcée, you could capture by promise of marriage."

"What is her name?"

"Eryfile. She is a baker's wife."

"A baker's wife!" answered the Radiant, making a grimace, "I don't like that."

"I can't help it. It's the kind of people I know best. Eryfile's husband is not at home at present; he went to Megara. His wife is the prettiest woman who ever walked on Mother-Earth."

"I am very anxious to see her."

"One condition more, my Silver-arrowed, you must promise that you will use only means worthy of you, and that you will not act as would act such a ruffian as Ares, for instance, or even, speaking between ourselves, as acts our common father, the Cloud-gathering Zeus."

"For whom do you take me?" asked Apollo.

"Then all conditions are understood, and I can show you Eryfile."

Both gods were immediately carried through the air from Pnyx, and in a few moments they were over a house situated not far from Stoa. The Argo-robber raised the whole roof with his powerful hand as easily as a woman cooking a dinner raises a cover from a saucepan, and pointing to a woman sitting in a store, closed from the street by a copper gate, said:

"Look!"

Apollo looked and was astonished.

Never Attica—never the whole of Greece, produced a lovelier flower than was this woman. She sat by a table on which was a lighted lamp, and was writing something on marble tables. Her long drooping eyelashes threw a shadow on her cheeks, but from time to time she raised her head and her eyes, as though she were trying to remember what she had to write, and then one could see her beautiful eyes, so blue that compared with them the turquoise depths of the Archipelago would look pale and faded. Her face was white as the sea-foam, pink as the dawn, with purplish Syrian lips and waves of golden hair. She was beautiful, the most beautiful being on earth—beautiful as the dawn, as a flower, as light, as song! This was Eryfile.

When she dropped her eyes she appeared quiet and sweet; when she lifted them, inspired. The Radiant's divine knees began to

tremble; suddenly he leaned his head on Hermes' shoulder, and whispered:

"Hermes, I love her! This one or none!"

Hermes smiled ironically, and would have rubbed his hands for joy under cover of his robe if he had not held in his right hand the caduceus.

In the mean while the golden-haired woman took a new tablet and began to write on it. Her divine lips were disclosed and her voice whispered; it was like the sound of Apollo's lyre.

"The member of the Areopagus Melanocles for the bread for two months, forty drachmas and four obols; let us write in round numbers forty-six drachmas. By Athena! let us write fifty; my husband will be satisfied! Ah, that Melanocles! If you were not in a position to bother us about false weight, I never would give you credit. But we must keep peace with that locust."

Apollo did not listen to the words. He was intoxicated with the woman's voice, the charm of her figure, and whispered:

"This one or none!"

The golden-haired woman spoke again, writing further:

"Alcibiades, for cakes on honey from Hymettus for Hetera Chrysalis, three minæ. He never verifies bills, and then he once gave me in Stoa a slap on the shoulder—we will write four minæ. He is stupid; let him pay for it. And then that Chrysalis! She must feed with cakes her carp in the pond, or perhaps Alcibiades makes her fat purposely, in order to sell her afterwards to a Phœnician merchant for an ivory ring for his harness."

Again Apollo paid no attention to the words—he was enchanted with the voice alone and whispered to Hermes:

"This one or none!"

But Maya's son suddenly covered the house,

the apparition disappeared, and it seemed to the Radiant Apollo that with it disappeared the stars, that the moon became black, and the whole world was covered with the darkness of Chimera.

"When shall we decide the wager?" asked Hermes.

"Immediately. To-day!"

"During her husband's absence she sleeps in the store. You can stand in the street before the door. If she raises the curtain and opens the gate, I have lost my wager."

"You have lost it already!" exclaimed the Far-darting Apollo.

The summer lightning does not pass from the East to the West as quickly as he rushed over the salt waves of the Archipelago. There he asked Amphitrite for an empty turtle-shell, put around it the rays of the sun, and returned to Athens with a ready formiga.

In the city everything was already quiet.

The lights were out, and only the houses and temples shone white in the light of the moon, which had risen high in the sky.

The store was dark, and in it, behind a gate and a curtain, the beautiful Eryfile was asleep. Apollo the Radiant began to touch the strings of his lyre. Wishing to awake softly his beloved, he played at first as gently as swarms of mosquitoes singing on a summer evening on Illis. But the song became gradually stronger like a brook in the mountain after a rain; then more powerful, sweeter, more intoxicating, and it filled the air voluptuously.

The secret Athena's bird flew softly from the Acropolis and sat motionless on the nearest column.

Suddenly a bare arm, worthy of Phidias or Praxiteles, whiter than Pantelican marble, drew aside the curtain. The Radiant's heart stopped beating with emotion. And then Eryfile's voice resounded:

"Ha! You booby, why do you wander about and make a noise during the night? I have been working all day, and now they won't let me sleep!"

"Eryfile! Eryfile!" exclaimed Silver-arrowed. And he began to sing:

"From lofty peaks of Parnas—where there ring
In all the glory of light's brilliant rays
The grand sweet songs which inspired muses sing
To me, by turns, in rapture and praise—
I, worshiped god—I fly, fly to thee,
Eryfile! And on thy bosom white
I shall rest, and the Eternity will be
A moment to me—the God of Light!"

"By the holy flour for sacrifices," exclaimed the baker's wife, "that street boy sings and makes love to me. Will you go home, you impudent!"

The Radiant, wishing to pursuade her that he was not a common mortal, threw so much light from his person, that all the earth was lighted. But Eryfile, seeing this, exclaimed:

"That scurrilous fellow has hidden a lantern under his robe, and he tries to make me believe that he is a god. O daughter of mighty Dios! they press us with taxes, but there is no Scythian guard to protect us from such stupid fellows!"

Apollo, who did not wish yet to acknowledge defeat, sang further:

"Ah, open thine arms—rounded, gleaming, white—
To thee eternal glory I will give.
Over goddess of earth, fair and bright,
Thy name above immortal shall live.
I kiss the dainty bloom of thy cheek,
To thy lustrous eyes the love-light I bring,
From the masses of thy silken hair I speak,
To thy beauty, peerless one, I sing.
White pearls are thy ruby lips between—
With might of godly words I thee endow;
An eloquence for which a Grecian queen
Would gladly give the crown from her brow.

Ah! Open, open thine arms!

The azure from the sea I will take,
Twilight its wealth of purple shall give too;

Twinkling stars shall add the sparks which they make,
And flowers shall yield their perfume and dew.
By fairy touch, light as a caress,
Made from all this material so bright,
My beloved rainbow, in Chipryd's rich dress
Thou shalt be clothed by the God of Light."

And the voice of the God of Light was so beautiful that it performed a miracle, for, behold! in the ambrosian night the gold spear standing on the Acropolis of Athens trembled, and the marble head of the gigantic statue turned toward the Acropolis in order to hear better. Heaven and Earth listened to it; the sea stopped roaring and lay peacefully near the shore; even the pale Selene stopped her night wandering in the sky and stood motionless over Athens.

And when Apollo had finished, a light wind arose and carried the song throughout the whole of Greece, and wherever a child in the cradle heard only a tone of it, that child became a poet.

But before Latona's son had finished his divine singing, the angry Eryfile began ot scream:

"What an ass! He tries to bribe me w[illegible] flowers and dew; do you think that you are privileged because my husband is not at home? What a pity that our servants are not at hand; I would give you a good lesson! But wait; I will teach you to wander during the nigh' with songs!"

So saying she seized a pot of dough, and, throwing it through the gate, splashed it over the face, neck, robe, and lyre of the Radiant. Apollo groaned, and, covering his inspired head with a corner of his wet robe, he departed in shame and wrath.

Hermes, waiting for him, laughed, turned somersaults, and twirled his caduceus. But when the sorrowful son of Latona approached him, the foxy patron of merchants simulated compassion and said:

"I am sorry you have lost, O puissant archer!"

"Go away, you rascal!" answered the angry Apollo.

"I shall go when you give me Lampecja."

"May Cerberus bite your calves. I shall not give you Lampecja, and I tell you to go away, or I will twist your neck."

The Argo-robber knew that he must not joke when Apollo was angry, so he stood aside cautiously and said:

"If you wish to cheat me, then in the future be Hermes and I will be Apollo. I know that you are above me in power, and that you can harm me, but happily there is some one who is stronger than you and he will judge us. Radiant, I call you to the judgment of Chronid! Come with me."

Apollo feared the name of Chronid. He did not care to refuse, and they departed.

In the mean time day began to break. The

Attic came out from the shadows. Pink-fingered dawn had arisen in the sky from the Archipelago. Zeus passed the night on the summit of Ida, whether he slept or not, and what he did there no one knew, because, Fog-carrying, he wrapped himself in such a thick cloud that even Hera could not see through it. Hermes trembled a little on approaching the god of gods and of people.

"I am right," he was thinking, "but if Zeus is aroused in a bad humor, and if, before hearing us, he should take us each by a leg and throw us some three hundred Athenian stadia, it would be very bad. He has some consideration for Apollo, but he would treat me without ceremony, although I am his son too."

But Maya's son feared in vain. Chronid waited joyfully on the earth, for he had passed a pleasant night, and was gladsomely gazing on the earthly circle. The Earth, happy beneath the weight of the gods' and people's

father, put forth beneath his feet green grass and young hyacinths, and he, leaning on it, caressed the curling flowers with his hand, and was happy in his proud heart.

Seeing this, Maya's son grew quiet, and having saluted the generator, boldly accused the Radiant.

When he had finished, Zeus was silent a while, and then said:

"Radiant, is it true?"

"It is true, father Chronid," answered Apollo, "but if after the shame you will order me to pay the bet, I shall descend to Hades and light the shades."

Zeus became silent and thoughtful.

"Then this woman," said he finally, "remained deaf to your music, to your songs, and she repudiated you with disdain?"

"She poured on my head a pot of dough, O Thunderer!"

Zeus frowned, and at his frown Ida trem-

bled, pieces of rock began to roll with a great noise toward the sea, and the trees bent like ears of wheat.

Both gods awaited with beating hearts his decision.

"Hermes," said Zeus, "you may cheat the people as much as you like—the people like to be cheated. But leave the gods alone, for if I become angry I will throw you into the ether, then you will sink so deep into the depths of the ocean that even my brother Poseidon will not be able to dig you out with his trident."

Divine fear seized Hermes by his smooth knees; Zeus spoke further, with stronger voice:

"A virtuous woman, especially if she loves another man, can resist Apollo. But surely and always a stupid woman will resist him.

"Eryfile is stupid, not virtuous; that's the reason she resisted. Therefore you cheated

the Radiant, and you shall not have Lampecja. Now go in peace."

The gods departed.

Zeus remained in his joyful glory. For a while he looked after Apollo, muttering:

"Oh, yes! A stupid woman is able to resist him."

After that, as he had not slept well the previous night, he called Sleep, who, sitting on a tree in the form of a hawk, was awaiting the orders of the Father of gods and people.

PART FIFTH

Part Fifth.

WIN OR LOSE.

A Drama in Five Acts.

CHARACTERS: Prince Starogrodzki.
Stella, his daughter.
George Pretwic, Stella's fiancé.
Karol Count Drahomir, Pretwic's friend.
Countess Miliszewska.
Jan Count Miliszewski.
Anton Zuk, secretary of the county.
Dr. Jozwowicz.
Mrs. Czeska.
Mr. Podczaski.
Servants.

ACT I.

The stage represents a drawing-room with the principal door leading to the garden. There are also side doors to the other rooms.

SCENE I.

Princess Stella. Mrs. Czeska.

Czeska.—Why do you tell me this only now? Really, my dear Stella, I should be angry with you. I live only a mile from here; I was your teacher before you were put into the hands of English and French governesses. I see you almost every day. I love my darling with all my soul, and still you did not tell me that for several weeks you have been engaged. At least do not torture me any longer, but tell me, who is he?

Stella.—You must guess, my dear mother.

Szeska.—As long as you call me mother, you must not make me wait.

Stella.—But I wish you to guess and tell me. Naturally it is he and not another. Believe me, it will flatter and please me.

Czeska.—Count Drahomir, then.

Stella.—Ah!

Czeska.—You are blushing. It is true. He has not been here for a long time, but how sympathetic, how gay he is. Well, my old eyes would be gladdened by seeing you both together. I should at once think what a splendid couple. Perhaps there will be something in it.

Stella.—There will be nothing in it, because Count Drahomir, although very sympathetic, is not my fiancé. I am betrothed to Mr. Pretwic.

Czeska.—Mr. George Pretwic?

Stella.—Yes. Are you surprised?

Czeska.—No, my dear child. May God bless you. Why should I be surprised? But I am so fond of Count Drahomir, so I thought

it was he. Mr. George Pretwic!—Oh, I am not surprised at all that he should love you. But it came a little too soon. How long have you known each other? Living at my Berwinek I do not know anything that goes on in the neighborhood.

Stella.—Since three months. My fiancé has inherited an estate in this neighborhood from the Jazlowieckis, and came, as you know, from far off. He was a near relation of the Jazlowieckis, and he himself comes of a very good family. Dear madam, have you not heard of the Pretwics?

Czeska.—Nothing at all, my dear Stella. What do I care for heraldry!

Stella.—In former times, centuries ago, the Pretwics were related to our family. It is a very good family. Otherwise papa would not have consented. Well then, Mr. Pretwic came here, took possession of the Jazlowieckis estate, became acquainted with us, and——

Czeska.—And fell in love with you. I should have done the same if I were in his place. It gives him more value in my eyes.

Stella.—Has he needed it?

Czeska.—No, my little kitten—rest easy. You know I am laughed at for seeing everything in a rosy hue. He belongs to a good family, he is young, rich, good-looking, well-bred, but——

Stella.—But what?

Czeska.—A bird must have sung it, because I cannot remember who told me that he is a little bit like a storm.

Stella.—Yes, his life has been stormy, but he was not broken by it.

Czeska.—So much the better. Listen! Such people are the best—they are true men. The more I think of it, the more sincerely I congratulate you.

Stella.—Thank you. I am glad I spoke to you frankly. The fact is that I am very lone-

some here: papa is always ailing and our doctor has been away for three months.

Czeska.—Let that doctor of yours alone.

Stella.—You never liked him.

Czeska.—You know that I am not easily prejudiced against any one, but I do not like him.

Stella.—And do you know that he has been offered a professorship at the university, and that he is anxious to be elected a member of parliament? Mother, you are really unjust. You know that he sacrificed himself for us.

He is famous, rich, and a great student, but notwithstanding all that he remains with us when the whole world is open to him. I would surely have asked his advice.

Czeska.—Love is not an illness—but no matter about him. May God help him! You had better tell me, dear kitten—are you very much in love?

Stella.—Do you not see how quickly every

thing has been done? It is true that Countess Miliszewska came here with her son. I know it was a question about me, and I feared, although in vain, that papa might have the same idea.

Czeska.—You have not answered my question.

Stella.—Because it is a hard matter to speak about. Mother, Mr. Pretwic's life is full of heroic deeds, sacrifices, and dangers. Once he was in great peril, and he owes his life to Count Drahomir. But how dearly he loves him for it. Well, my fiancé bears the marks of distant deserts, long solitudes, and deep sufferings. But when he begins to tell me of his life, it seems that I truly love that stalwart man. If you only knew how timidly, and at the same time how earnestly he told me of his love, and then he added that he knows his hands are too rough——

Czeska.—Not too rough—for they are hon-

est. After what you have told me, I am in his favor with all my soul.

Stella.—But in spite of all that, sometimes I feel very unhappy.

Czeska.—What is the matter? Why?

Stella.—Because sometimes we cannot understand each other. There are two kinds of love—one is strong as the rocks, and the other is like a brook in which one can see one's self. When I look at George's love, I see its might, but my soul is not reflected in it like a face in a limpid brook. I love him, it is true, but sometimes it seems to me that I could love still more—that all my heart is not in that love, and then I am unhappy.

Czeska.—But I cannot understand that. I take life simply. I love, or I do not love. Well Stella, the world is so cleverly constructed, and God is so good that there is nothing more easy than to be happy. But one must not make a tangle of God's affairs. Be calm.

You are very much in love indeed. No matter!

Stella.—That confidence in the future is exactly what I need—some of your optimism. I knew that you would frown and say: No matter! I am now more happy. Only I am afraid of our doctor. Well (looking through the window), our gentlemen are coming. Mr. Pretwic and Count Drahomir.

Czeska (looking through the window.)—Your future husband is looking very well, but so is Count Drahomir. Since when is he with Mr. Pretwic?

Stella (looking through the window).—For the past two weeks. Mr. Pretwic has invited him. They are coming.

Czeska.—And your little heart is throbbing——

Stella.—Do not tease me again.

Scene II.

Mrs. Czeska. Stella. George Pretwic. Count Drahomir.—The count has his left arm in a sling.—A servant.

Servant (opening the door).—The princess is in the drawing-room.

Stella.—How late you are to-day!

George.—It is true. The sun is already setting. But we could not come earlier. Do you not know that there has been a fire in the neighboring village? We went there.

Czeska.—We have heard of it. It seems that several houses were burned.

George.—The fire began in the morning, and it was extinguished only now. Some twenty families are without a roof and bread. We are also late because Karol had an accident.

Stella (with animation).—It is true. Your arm is in a sling!

Drahomir.—Oh, it is a mere trifle. If there were no more serious wounds in the world, courage would be sold in all the markets. Only a slight scratch——

Stella.—Mr. Pretwic, how did it happen?

George.—When it happened I was at the other end of the village, and I could not see anything on account of the smoke. I was only told that Karol had jumped into a burning house.

Stella.—Oh, Lord!

Drahomir (laughing).—I see that my deed gains with distance.

Czeska.—You must tell us about it yourself.

Drahomir.—They told me that there was a woman in a house of which the roof had begun to burn. Thinking that this salamander who was not afraid of fire was some enchanted beauty, I entered the house out of pure curiosity. It was quite dark owing to the smoke. I looked and saw that I had no luck, because

the salamander was only an old Jewish woman packing some feathers in a bag. Amidst the cloud of down she looked like anything you please but an enchantress. I shouted that there was a fire, and she shouted too, evidently taking me for a thief—so we both screamed. Finally I seized hold of my salamander, fainting with fear, and carried her out, not even through a window, but through the door.

George.—But you omitted to say that the roof fell in and that a spar struck your hand.

Drahomir.—True—and I destroyed the dam of my modesty, and will add that one of the selectmen of the village made a speech in my honor. It seems to me that he made some mention of a monument which they would erect for me. But pray believe that the fire was quenched by George and his people. I think they ought to erect two monuments.

Czeska.—I know that you are worthy of each other.

Stella.—Thank God that you have not met with some more serious accident.

Drahomir.—I have met with something very pleasant—your sympathy.

Czeska—You have mine also—as for Mr. Pretwic, I have a bone to pick with him.

George—Why, dear madam?

Czeska.—Because you are a bad boy. (To Stella and Drahomir.) You had better go to the Prince, and let us talk for a while.

Stella.—Mother, I see you wish to flirt with Mr. Pretwic.

Czeska.—Be quiet, you giddy thing. May I not compete with you? But you must remember, you Mayflower, that before every autumn there is a spring. Well, be off!

Stella (to Drahomir).—Let us go; Papa is in the garden and I am afraid that he is feeling worse. What a pity it is that the doctor is not here.

Scene III.

Mrs. Czeska, George, then Stella.

Czeska.—I should scold you, as I have my dear girl, for keeping the secret. But she has already told me everything, so I only say, may God bless you both.

George (kissing her hand).—Thank you, madam.

Czeska.—I have reared that child. I was ten years with her, so I know what a treasure you take, sir. You have said that your hands are too rough. I have answered her—not too rough, for they are honest. But Stella is a very delicate flower. She must be loved much, and have good care taken of her. But you will be able to do it—will you not?

George.—What can I tell you? As far as it is in human power to make happy that dear-

est to me girl, so far I wish to assure her happiness with me.

Czeska.—With all my soul, I say: God bless you!

George.—The Princess Stella loves you like her own mother, so I will be as frank with you as with a mother. My life has been a very hard one. There was a moment when my life was suspended by one thread—Karol rescued me then, and for that I love him as a brother; and then——

Czeska.—Stella told me. You lived far from here?

George.—I was in the empty steppe, half wild myself, among strangers, therefore very sad and longing for the country. Sometimes there was not a living soul around me.

Czeska.—God was over the stars.

George.—That is quite different. But a heart thrown on earth must love some one.

Therefore, with all this capacity for love, I prayed to God that he permit me to love some one. He has granted my prayer, and has given her to me. Do you understand me now?

Czeska.—Yes, I do understand you!

George.—How quickly everything has changed. I inherited here an estate and am able to settle—then I met the princess, and now I love her—she is everything in this world to me.

Czeska.—My dear Mr. Pretwic, you are worthy of Stella and she will be happy with you. My dear Stelunia——

Stella (appearing in the doorway leading to the garden. She claps her hands).—What good news! The doctor is coming. He is already in the village. Papa will at once be more quiet and is in better humor.

Czeska.—You must not rush. She is already tired. Where is the prince?

Stella.—In the garden. He wishes you to come here.

George.—We will go.

Stella (steps forward—then stops).—But you must not tell the doctor anything of our affair. I wish to tell him first. I have asked papa also to keep the secret. (They go out.)

Scene IV.

Jozwowicz (enters through the principal door).—Jan, carry my trunk up-stairs and have the package I left in the antechamber sent at once to Mr. Anton Zuk, the secretary of the county.

Servant (bows).—Very well, doctor.

Jozwowicz (advances). — At last (servant goes out). After three months of absence, how quiet this house is always! In a moment I will greet them as a future member of the parliament. I have thrown six years of hard

work, sleepless nights, fame, and learning into the chasm which separates us—and now we shall see! (He goes toward the door leading to the garden.) They are coming—she has not changed at all.

Scene V.

(Through the door enter Stella, Mrs. Czeska, George, followed by Drahomir, arm and arm with the Prince Starogrodzki.)

Stella.—Here is our doctor! Our dear doctor! How do you do? We were looking for you!

Czeska (bows ceremoniously).—Especially the prince.

Jozwowicz (kissing Stella's hand).—Good evening, princess. I have also been anxious to return. I have come to stay for a longer time—to rest. Ah, the prince! How is Your Highness's health?

Prince (shaking hands).—Dear boy. I am not well. You did well to come. You must see at once what is the matter with me.

Jozwowicz.—But now Your Highness will introduce me to these gentlemen.

Prince.—It is true. Doctor Jozwowicz, the minister of my interior affairs—I said it well, did I not? For you do look after my health. Count Karol Drahomir.

Drahomir.—Your name is familiar to me, therefore, strictly speaking, I alone ought to introduce myself.

Doctor.—Sir.

Prince (introducing).—Mr. George Pretwic, our neighbor, and—(Stella makes a sign) and—I wish to say——

George.—If I am not mistaken, your schoolmate.

Doctor.—I did not wish to be the first to recollect.

George.—I am glad to see you. It is quite

a long time since then, but we were good comrades. Truly, I am very glad, especially after what I have heard here about you.

Drahomir.—You are the good spirit of this house.

Stella.—Oh, yes!

Prince.—Let me tell you my opinion of him.

George.—How often the best student, Jozwowicz, helped Pretwic with his exercises.

Doctor.—You have a good memory, sir.

George.—Very good, indeed, for then we did not call each other "sir." Once more, Stanislaw, I welcome you.

Doctor.—And I return the welcome.

George.—But do I not remember that after you went through college you studied law?

Doctor.—And afterward I became a doctor of medicine.

Prince.—Be seated. Jan, bring the lights.

Stella.—How charming that you are acquainted!

Doctor.—The school-bench, like misery, unites people. But then, social standing separates them. George's future was assured. I was obliged to search for mine.

Prince.—He has searched also, and found adventures.

Drahomir.—In two parts of the world.

Czeska.—That is splendid.

Doctor.—Well, he followed his instinct. Even in school he broke the horses, went shooting and fenced.

George.—Better than I studied.

Doctor (laughing).—Yes—we used to call him the general, because he commanded us in our student fights.

Drahomir. — George, I recognized you there.

Czeska.—But now, I think, he will stop fighting.

Stella.—Who knows?

George.—I am sure of it.

Doctor.—As for me, I was his worst soldier. I never was fond of playing that way.

Prince.—Because those are the distractions of the nobility and not of a doctor.

Doctor.—We begin to quarrel already. You are all proud of the fact that your ancestors, the knights, killed so many people. But if the prince knew how many people I have killed with my prescriptions! I can guarantee you that none of Your Highness's ancestors can be proud of such great number.

Drahomir.—Bravo. Very good!

Prince.—And he is my doctor!

Stella.—Papa! The doctor is joking.

Prince.—Thanks for such jokes. But it is sure that the world is now upside-down.

Doctor. — Your Highness, we will live a hundred years more. (To George.) Come, tell me, what became of you? (They go out.)

Prince.—You would not believe how unhappy I am because I cannot get along with

that man. He is the son of a blacksmith from Stanislawow. I sent him to school because I wished to make an overseer of him. But afterwards he went to study at the University.

Drahomir.—He is twice a doctor—he is an intelligent man. One can see that by merely looking at him.

Stella.—Very much so.

Czeska.—So intelligent that I am afraid of him.

Drahomir.—But the prince must be satisfied.

Prince.—Satisfied, satisfied! He has lost his common sense. He became a democrat—a *sans culotte*. But he is a good doctor, and I am sick. I have some stomach trouble. (To Drahomir.) Have you heard of it?

Drahomir.—The prince complained already some time ago.

Czeska.—For twenty years.

Prince.—Sorrow and public service have ruined my health.

Czeska.—But Your Highness is healthy.

Prince (angrily).—I tell you that I am sick. Stella, I am sick—am I not?

Stella.—But now you will feel better.

Prince.—Because he alone keeps me alive. Stella would have died also with heart trouble if it had not been for him.

Drahomir.—If that is so, he is a very precious man.

Stella.—We owe him eternal gratitude.

Prince (looking at George).—He will also be necessary to Pretwic. What, Stella, will he not?

Stella (laughing).—Papa, how can I know that?

Drahomir.—Truly, I sometimes envy those stalwart men. During the battle they strengthen in themselves the force which lessens and disappears in us, because nothing nourishes

it. Perhaps we are also made of noble metal, but we are eaten up with rust while they are hardened in the battle of life. It is a sad necessity.

Czeska.—How about Mr. Pretwic?

Drahomir. — George endured much, it is true, and one feels this although it is difficult to describe it. Look at those two men. When the wind blows George resists like a century-old tree, and men like the doctor subdue it and order it to propel his boat. There is in that some greater capacity for life, therefore the result is more easy to be foreseen. The tree is older, and although still strong, the more it is bitten by the storms, the sooner it will die.

Prince.—I have said many times that we die like old trees. Some other thicket grows, but it is composed only of bushes.

Stella.—The one who is good has the right to live—we must not doubt about ourselves.

Drahomir.—I do not doubt, even for the reason that the poet says: "Saintly is the one who knows how to be a friend" (bows to Stella) "with saints."

Stella.—If he has not secured their friendship by flattery.

Drahomir.—But I must be permitted not to envy the doctor anything.

Stella.—The friendship is not exclusive, although I look upon the doctor as a brother.

Prince.—Stella, what are you talking about? He is your brother as I am a republican. I cannot suffer him, but I cannot get along without him.

Czeska.—Prince, you are joking——

Drahomir (smiling).—Why should you hate him?

Prince.—Why? Have I not told you? He does with us what he pleases. He does as he likes in the house, he does not believe anything, and he is ambitious as the deuce. He

is already a professor in the University, and now he wishes to be a member of parliament. Do you hear?—he will be a member of parliament! But I would not be a Starogrodzki if I had permitted it. (Aloud.) Jozwowicz!

Doctor (he is near a window).—Your Highness, what do you order?

Prince.—Is it true that you are trying to become a member of parliament.

Doctor.—At your service, Your Highness?

Prince.—Mrs. Czeska. Have you heard—the world is upside down, Jozwowicz!

Doctor.—What is it, Your Highness?

Prince.—And perhaps you will also become a minister.

Doctor.—It may be.

Prince.—Did you hear? And do you think that I will call you "Your Excellency"?

Doctor.—It would be proper.

Prince.—Jozwowicz, do you wish to give me a stroke of apoplexy?

Doctor.—Be calm, Your Highness. My Excellency will always take care of your Grace's bile.

Prince.—It is true. The irritation hurts me. What, Jozwowicz—does it hurt me?

Doctor.—Yes, it excites the bile, but it gives you an appetite. (He approaches with George.)

Stella.—What were you talking about?

Doctor.—I have been listening to George. Horrible! Dreadful! George made a mistake by coming into the world two hundred years too late. Bayards are not appreciated nowadays.

Czeska.—Providence is above all.

Drahomir.—I believe it also.

Doctor.—Were I a mathematician, without contradicting you I would say that, as in many cases we do not know what X equals, we must take care of ourselves.

Prince.—What are you saying?

Stella.—Doctor, pray do not talk so scepti-

cally, or there will be a war—not with papa, but with me.

Doctor.—My scepticism is ended where your words begin, therefore I surrender.

Stella.—How gallant—the member of parliament.

Scene VI.

The same Servant.

Servant.—Tea is served.

George.—I must bid you good-bye.

Stella.—Why, why are you going so early to-night?

Doctor (aside).—My old schoolmate is at home here.

George.—You must excuse me. I am very happy with you, but to-night I must be going home. I will leave Drahomir—he will replace me.

Stella.—To be angry with you would be to

make you conceited. But you must tell me why you are going.

George.—The people who have lost their homes by fire are in my house. I must give some orders and provide for their necessities.

Czeska (aside).—He is sacrificing pleasure to duty. (Aloud.) Stella!

Stella.—What is it?

Czeska.—To-morrow we must make some collections for them, and provide them with clothing.

Doctor.—I will go with you, ladies. It will be the first case in which misery did not search for the doctor, but the doctor searched for misery.

Czeska.—Very clever.

Prince (rapping with the stick).—Pretwic!

George.—Your Highness, what do you order?

Prince.—You say that this rabble is very poor?

George.—Very poor, indeed.

Prince.—You say that they have nothing to eat?

George.—Almost nothing, my prince.

Prince.—God punishes them for voting for such a man (he points to Jozwowicz) as that one.

Doctor (bows).—They have not elected me yet.

Stella.—Papa.

Prince.—What did I want to say? Aha! Pretwic!

George.—I listen to you, my prince.

Prince.—You said that they were starving?

George.—I said—almost.

Prince.—Very well, then. Go to my cashier, Horkiewicz, and tell him to give that rabble a thousand florins. (He raps with the stick.) They must know that I will not permit any one to be hungry.

Stella.—Dear father!

Drahomir.—I knew it would end that way.

Prince. — Yes, Mr. Jozwowicz! *Noblesse oblige!* Do you understand, your Excellency, Mr. Jozwowicz?

Doctor.—I understand, Your Highness.

Prince (giving his arm to Mrs. Czeska).—And now let us take some tea. (George takes leave and goes out.)

Doctor.—I must also be going. I am tired and I have some letters to write.

Prince.—Upon my honor, one might think that he was already a minister. But come to see us—I cannot sleep without you.

Doctor.—I will be at the service of Your Highness.

Prince (muttering).—As soon as this Robespièrre arrived, I immediately felt better.

Stella.—Doctor, wait a moment. I do not take any tea. I will only put papa in his place, and then I will be back immediately. I must have a talk with you.

Scene VII.

Jozwowicz alone—then Stella.

Doctor.—What are these people doing here, and what does she wish to tell me? Is it possible—— But no, it is impossible. I am uneasy, but in a moment everything will be cleared up. What an ass I am! She simply wishes to talk to me about the prince's health. It is this moonlight that makes me so dreamy —I ought to have a guitar.

Stella (entering).—Mr. Jozwowicz?

Doctor.—I am here, princess.

Stella.—I did my best not to make you wait too long. Let us be seated and have a talk, as formerly, when I was small and not well and you took care of my health. I remember sometimes I used to fall asleep, and you carried me in your arms to my room.

Doctor.—The darling of every one in the house was very weak then.

Stella.—And to-day, if she is well, it is thanks to you. If she has any knowledge, it is also thanks to you. I am a plant of which you have taken good care.

Doctor.—And my greatest pride. There were few calm, genial moments in my life—and peace I found only in that house.

Stella.—You were always good, and for that reason I look upon you as an older brother.

Doctor.—Your words form the only smile in my life. I not only respect you, but I also love you dearly—like a sister, like my own child.

Stella.—Thank you. I have not the same confidence in any one else's judgment and honesty as I have in yours, so I wished to speak to you about an important matter. I hope even that what I am going to tell you will please you as much as it pleases me. Is it true that you are going to become a member of parliament?

Doctor (with uneasiness).—No, it is only

probable. But speak of what concerns you.

Stella.—Well, then — ah, Lord! But you will not leave papa, will you?

Doctor (breathing heavily).—Oh, you wish to speak of the prince's health?

Stella.—No, I know that papa is getting better. I did not expect that it would be difficult—— I am afraid of the severe opinion that you have of people.

Doctor (with simulated ease).—Pray, do not torture my curiosity.

Stella.—Then I will close my eyes and tell you, although it is not easy for any young girl. You know Mr. George Pretwic well, do you not?

Doctor (uneasily).—I know him.

Stella.—How do you like him? He is my fiancé.

Doctor (rising).—Your fiancé?

Stella.—Good gracious!—then you do not

approve of my choice? (A moment of silence.)

Doctor.—Only one moment. Your choice, princess, if it is of your heart and will, must be good—only—it was unexpected news to me; therefore, perhaps, I received it a little too seriously. But I could not hear it with indifference owing to the affection I have for—your family. And then, my opinion does not amount to anything in such a matter. Princess, I congratulate you and wish you all happiness.

Stella.—Thank you. Now I shall be more easy.

Doctor.—You must return to your father. Your news has been so sudden that it has shocked me a little. I must collect my wits—I must familiarize myself with the thought. But in any event, I congratulate you.

Stella.—Good night. (She stops in the door, looks at the Doctor and goes in.)

Scene VIII.

Jozwowicz (alone).—Too late!

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

The stage represents the same drawing-room.

Scene I.

Jozwowicz. Anton.

Doctor.—Anton, come here. We can talk quietly, for they are preparing my room. What news from the city?

Anton.—Good news. In an hour or so a delegation of the voters will be here. You must say something to them—you understand? Something about education — public roads, heavy taxes. You know what to say better than I do.

Doctor.—I know, I know; and how do they like my platform?

Anton.—You have made a great hit. I congratulate you. It is written with scientific accuracy. The papers of the Conservative party have gone mad with wrath.

Doctor.—Very good. What more?

Anton.—Three days ago your election was doubtful in the suburbs. I learned about it, however—gathered the electors and made a speech. "Citizens," I said, in the end, "I know only one remedy for all your misery—it is called Jozwowicz. Long live Progress!" I also attacked the Conservative party.

Doctor.—Anton, you are a great boy. Then there is a hope of victory?

Anton.—Almost a surety. And then, even if we do not win now, the future is open to us. And do you know why? Because—leaving out the details of the election, you and I, while talking of our business affairs, need not

laugh at each other, like Roman augurs. Progress and truth are on our side, and every day makes a new breach in the old wall. We are only aiding the centuries and we must conquer. I am talking calmly: Our people, our electors are merely sheep, but we wish to make men of them, and therein lies our strength. As for me, if I were not persuaded that in my principles lie truth and progress, I would spit on everything and become a monk.

Doctor.—But it would be a dreadful thing if we do not win this time.

Anton.—I am sure we will win. You are a fearful candidate for our adversaries. You have only one antagonist who is at all dangerous—Husarski, a rich and popular nobleman.

Doctor.—Once I am in parliament, I will try to accomplish something.

Anton.—I believe in you, and for that rea-

son I am working for you. Ha! ha! "They have already taken from us everything," said Count Hornicki at the club yesterday, "importance, money—even good manners." Well, at least I have not taken their good manners from them. To the devil with them!

Doctor.—No, you have truly not taken their good manners from them.

Anton.—But it is said in the city that your prince has given a thousand florins to those whose houses were burned. This may be bad for us. You must do something also.

Doctor.—I did what I could.

Anton.—I must also tell you that yesterday——. What is the matter with you? I am talking to you and you are thinking about something else.

Doctor.—Excuse me. I am in great trouble. I cannot think as calmly as usual.

Anton.—The idea!

Doctor.—You could not understand it.

Anton.—I am the coachman of the carriage in which you are riding—I must know everything.

Doctor.—No. It does not concern you.

Anton.—It does concern me, because you are losing your energy. We have no need of any Hamlets.

Doctor (gloomily).—You are mistaken. I have not given up.

Anton.—I see. You close your mouth on this subject. It is not in your character to give up.

Doctor.—No. You must work to have me elected. I would lose doubly if we were bitten.

Anton.—They must have burned you like the deuce, for you hiss dreadfully.

Doctor.—An old story. A peasant did not sleep for six years, did not eat, bent his neck, wounded his hands, and carried logs for a hut. After six years a lord came along, kicked the

hut and said: "My castle shall stand here." We are sceptical enough to laugh at such things.

Anton.—He was a real lord!

Doctor.—A lord for generations. He carried his head so high that he did not notice what cracked beneath his feet.

Anton.—I like the story. And what about the peasant?

Doctor.—According to the peasant tradition, he is thinking of a flint and tinder.

Anton.—Glorious idea! Truly we despise tradition too much. There are good things in it.

Doctor.—Enough. Let us talk of something else.

Anton (looking around).—An old and rich house. It would make a splendid cabin.

Doctor.—What do you say?

Anton.—Nothing. Has the old prince a daughter?

Doctor.—Yes. Why?

Anton (laughing).—Ha, ha! Your trouble has the scent of a perfume used by a lady. I smell here the petticoat of the princess. Behind the member of parliament is Jozwowicz, just as behind the evening dress there is the morning gown. What a strong perfume!

Doctor.—You may sell your perspicacity at another market. It is my personal affair.

Anton.—Not at all, for it means that you put only half your soul into public affairs. To the deuce with such business! Look at me. They howl at me in the newspapers, they laugh at me—but I do not care. I will tell you more! I feel that I shall never rise, although I am not lacking in strength nor intelligence. I could try to get the first place in camp to command, but I do not do it. Why? Because I know myself very well. Because I know that I am lacking in order, authority, tact. I have been and I am a tool, used by such as you, and which to-morrow may be

kicked aside when it is no more needed. But my self-love does not blind me. I do not care most for myself—I am working for my convictions—that is all. Any day I may be ousted from my position. There is often misery in my house, and although I love my wife and children—no matter. When it is a question of my convictions, I will work, act, agitate. I put my whole soul in it. And for you, the petticoat of a princess bars your way. I did not expect this from you. Tfu! spit on everything and come with us.

Doctor.—You are mistaken. I have no desire for martyrdom, but for victory. And the more personal ties there are between me and public affairs, the more I will serve them with my mind, heart, and deeds—with all that constitutes a man. Do you understand?

Anton.—Amen. His eyes shine like the eyes of a wolf—now I recognize you.

Doctor.—What more do you wish?

Anton.—Nothing more. I will only tell you that our motto should be: Attack the principles, and not the people.

Doctor.—Your virginal virtue may rest assured. I shall not poison any one.

Anton.—I believe you, but I must tell you that I know you well. I appreciate your energy, your learning, your common sense, but I should not like to cross you in anything.

Doctor.—So much the better for me.

Anton.—But if it is a question of the nobility, notwithstanding our programme I make you a present of them. You shall not cut their heads off.

Doctor.—To be sure. And now go and get to work for me—or rather, for us.

Anton.—For us, Jozwowicz. Do not forget that.

Doctor.—I will not swear it to you, but I promise you that I will not forget.

Anton.—But how will you manage that nobleman?

Doctor.—Do you require that I make you my confidant?

Anton.—In the first place, I do not need your confidence, because in our camp we have sufficient perspicacity. There is the matter of the prince's daughter—that is all. But I am always afraid that for her sake you will abandon public affairs. As I am working for you, I am responsible for you, therefore we must be frank.

Doctor.—Let us be frank.

Anton.—Therefore you have said to yourself: I shall get rid of that nobleman. Do it then. It is your business—but I ask you once more: Do you wish to become a member of parliament for us, or for the princess? That is my business.

Doctor.—I throw my cards on the table. I, you, we are all new people, and all of us have

this quality—we are not dolls, painted with the same color. There is room in us for convictions, love, hatred—in a word, as I told you, for everything of which a man of complex nature is composed. Nature has given me a heart and the right to live, therefore I desire for happiness; it gave me a mind, therefore I serve my chosen idea. One does not exclude the other. Why should you mix the princess with our public affairs—you, an intelligent man? Why do you wish to replace life by a phrase? I have the right to be happy, and I shall achieve it. And I shall know how to harmonize the idea with the life, like a sail with a boat. I shall sail more surely then. You must understand me; in that is our strength—that we know how to harmonize. In that lies our superiority over others, for they do not know how to live. What I will amount to with that woman, I do not know. You call me a Hamlet—perhaps I

may become a Hamlet, but you have no need of it.

Anton.—It seems to me that you are again right. But thus you will fight two battles, and your forces will have to be divided.

Doctor.—No! I am strong enough.

Anton.—Say frankly—she is betrothed.

Doctor.—Yes.

Anton.—And she loves her fiancé.

Doctor.—Or she deceives herself.

Anton.—At any rate, she does not love you.

Doctor.—In the first place, I must get rid of him. In the mean while, go and work.

Anton (consulting watch).—In a few moments the committee will be here to see you.

Doctor.—Very well. The prince is coming with the Countess Miliszewska and her son, my opponent. Let us be going.

Scene II.

Prince, Stella, Mrs. Czeska, Countess Miliszewska, Jan Miliszewski, Podczaski.

Countess.—It is impossible to understand. The world grows wild nowadays.

Prince.—I say the same. Stella, do I not say so?

Stella.—Very often.

Countess (low to her son).—Sit near the princess and entertain her. Go ahead!

Jan.—I am going, mamma.

Countess.—There is too much of that audacity. I have sent Mr. Podczaski to the electors, and they say: "We do not need representatives without heads." I am only surprised that the prince is not more indignant. I rush here and there, I pray and work, and they dare to oppose to my son Mr. Jozwowicz.

Prince.—But madam, what can I do?

Countess.—And who is Mr. Jozwowicz—a physician? What does a doctor amount to? Jan has influence, importance, social position, relatives—and what has the doctor? From whence did he come here? Who ever heard of him? Really, I cannot speak calmly, and I think it must be the end of the world. Is it not, Mr. Podczaski?

Podczaski (saluting).—Yes, countess, God's wrath. There were never such loud thunders.

Prince.—Thunders? Mrs. Czeska, what? Have your heard thunder?

Czeska.—It is a very usual thing at the end of spring. Do not mind it.

Countess (in a low voice).—Jan, go ahead.

Jan.—Yes, mamma, I am going.

Countess.—Prince, you will see that Jan will not be elected purely on account of the hatred against us. They say that he does not know the country, and does not understand its needs. But before all we must not allow such people

as Jozwowicz to become important in the country. Prince, is it not so?

Prince.—He will not ask your permission.

Countess.—That is exactly why the world must be coming to an end—that such people can do as they please! They dare to say that Jan will not be able to make a good representative, and that Mr. Jozwowicz will. Jan was always an excellent student in Metz. Jan, were you not a good student?

Jan.—Yes, mamma.

Podczaski. — Countess, you are perfectly right. It is the end of the world.

Stella.—What did you study especially?

Jan.—I, madam? I studied the history of heresy.

Princess.—Mrs. Czeska—what? Have studied what?

Countess.—They reproach us with not having talent, but for diplomacy one must have talent.

Podczaski.—The count does even look like a diplomat.

Prince (aside).—Well, not very much.

Czeska.—The count does not have much to say.

Jan.—No, madam, but sometimes I speak quite enough.

Countess.—For my part, I declare that if Jan is not elected, we will leave the country.

Podczaski.—They will be guilty of it.

Countess.—It will be the fault of the prince.

Prince.—Mine?

Countess.—How can you permit such as Jozwowicz to compete with society people? Why do you retain him?

Prince.—Frankly speaking, it is not I who keep him—it is he who keeps me. If it were not for him, I should long since be (he makes a gesture).

Countess (angrily).—By keeping him, you serve the democracy.

Prince.—I—I serve the democracy? Stella, do you hear? (He raps with his stick.)

Countess.—Every one will say so. Mr. Jozwowicz is the democratic candidate.

Prince.—But I am not, and if it is so I will not allow him to be. I have enough of Mr. Jozwowicz's democracy. They shall not say that I am the tool of democracy. (He rings the bell. A servant enters.) Ask the doctor to come here.

Countess.—Now the prince is a true prince.

Prince.—I serve democracy, indeed!

Stella.—Papa, dear.

Countess.—We must bid the prince good-bye. Jan, get ready. Good-bye, dear Stella. Good-bye, my child. (To her son.) Kiss the princess's hand.

Scene III.

The same.

Jozwowicz.—Your Highness must excuse me if I am too late, but I was obliged to receive the delegates.

Countess.—What delegates are here? Jan, go ahead.

Doctor (saluting).—Count, you must hasten, they are leaving.

Podczaski.—I am Your Highness's servant. (Countess, Jan, Podczaski go out. Stella and Mrs. Czeska follow them.)

Scene IV.

Jozwowicz. Prince. (A moment of silence.)

Prince (rapping with his stick).—I forbid you to become a member of parliament.

Doctor.—I shall not obey.

Prince.—You make me angry.

Doctor.—Your Highness closes to me the future.

Prince (angrily).—I have brought you up.

Doctor.—I preserve Your Highness's life.

Prince.—I have been a second father to you.

Doctor.—Your Highness, let us speak calmly. If you have been to me a father, I have until now been to you a son. But the father must not bar to his son the road to distinction.

Prince.—Public distinction is not for such people as you, sir.

Doctor (laughing).—A moment ago Your Highness called me a son.

Prince.—What son?

Doctor.—Your Highness, were I your son I would be rich and have a title—in a word everything Your Highness possesses. But being a poor man, I must make my way, and no one has the right to bar it to me, especially if my

road is straight and honest. (Laughing.) Unless Your Highness would like to adopt me in order to preserve the family.

Prince.—What nonsense you are talking.

Doctor.—I am only joking. Well, Your Highness, let us cease this irritation.

Prince.—It is true, it hurts me. Why will you not give up the idea of becoming a member of parliament?

Doctor.—It is my future.

Prince.—And in the mean time I am vexed by every one on that account. When I was young I was in many battles and I did not fear. I can show my decorations. I was not afraid of death on the battlefield, but those Latin illnesses of yours—— Why do you look at me in that way?

Doctor.—I am looking as usual. As for your illness, I will say that it is more the imagination of Your Highness than anything else. The constitution is strong, and with my as-

sistance Your Highness will live to the age of Methusaleh.

Prince.—Are you sure of it?

Doctor.—Positive.

Prince.—Good boy! And you will not leave me?

Doctor.—Your Highness may be assured of that.

Prince.—Then you may become a member of parliament or whatever you please. Stella! Oh, she is not here! Upon my honor, that Miliszewski is an ass. Don't you think so?

Doctor.—I cannot contradict Your Highness.

Scene V.

The same. Stella and Mrs. Czeska.

Stella.—I came because I was afraid you would quarrel. Well, what is the end of the discussion?

Prince.—Well, that good-for-nothing man will do what he pleases.

Doctor.—The fact is that the prince has approved of my plans and has granted me permission to try my luck at the election.

Mrs. Czeska.—We had better all go to the garden. Mr. Pretwic and Count Drahomir are waiting—we are going for a sail on the lake.

Prince.—Then let us be going (they go out). You see, madam, that Miliszewska!

Scene VI.

Jozwowicz, Stella. Then Drahomir.

Stella.—How is my father's health?

Doctor.—All that can be expected. But you are pale, princess.

Stella.—Oh, I am well.

Doctor.—It is the consequence of the betrothal.

Stella.—It must be.

Doctor.—But health requires one to be merry—to enjoy life.

Stella.—I do not wish for any other distraction.

Doctor.—If not distraction, at least enjoyment. We here are too grave for you. Perhaps we cannot understand you.

Stella.—You are all too good.

Doctor.—At least solicitous. If you have a moment to spare let us be seated and have a talk. My solicitude must explain my boldness. With the dignity of a fiancé, serenity and happiness generally go hand in hand. When the heart is given willingly, all longing ceases and the future is viewed with serenity.

Stella.—My future contains something which might cause even the most valiant to fear.

Doctor.—Of what are you talking? You have called me a sceptic, but it is I who says: who loves, believes.

Stella.—What then?

Doctor.—Who doubts?

Stella.—Doctor.

Doctor.—Princess, I do not inquire. There are moments when the serenity visibly departs from your face, therefore I question you, which is my duty as a physician and a friend. Be calm. Pray, remember that this is asked by a man whom a while ago you called "brother," and who knows how dear to him is the happiness of such a sister! I have no one in this world—all my love of family is centred in your house. My heart has also its sorrows. Pray, quiet my apprehensions—that is all I ask you.

Stella.—What apprehensions?

Doctor.—Apprehensions of which I dare not speak. Since my return I have watched you constantly, and the more I watch you the more do I fear. You fear the future—you do not look into it with confidence and hope.

Stella.—Permit me to go.

Doctor.—No, madam. I have the right to

ask, and if you fear to look into the bottom of your heart, then I have the right to say that you lack courage, and for such sinful weakness one pays later with his own happiness and the happiness of others. I suffer also—but I must—I must. Madam, listen to me. If in your heart there is even the shadow of a doubt, you have mistaken your sentiments.

Stella.—Is it possible to make such a mistake?

Doctor.—Yes. Sometimes—often one mistakes sympathy, pity, commiseration for love.

Stella.—What a dreadful mistake!

Doctor.—Which one recognizes as soon as the heart flies in another direction. The dignity of a fiancé is a hidden pain. If I am mistaken, pray forgive me.

Stella.—Doctor, I do not wish to think of such things.

Doctor.—Then I am not mistaken. Do not look on me with fear. I wish to save you,

my dear child. Where is your heart? The moment that you recognize you do not love Mr. Pretwic, that moment will tell you whom you do love. No, I shall not withdraw my question. Where is your heart? By God, if he is not equal to you, he shall rise to your height! But no, I have become a madman.

Stella.—I must be going.

Doctor (barring the way).—No, you shall not go until you have given me an answer. Whom do you love?

Stella.—Doctor, spare me—otherwise I shall doubt everything. Have pity on me.

Doctor (brutally)—Whom do you love?

Scene VII.

The same. Drahomir

Drahomir.—Princess.

Stella.—Ah!

Drahomir.—What! Have I frightened

you? I came to tell you that the boats are waiting. What is the matter with you?

Stella.—Nothing. Let us be going.

(Drahomir offers his arm—they go out.)

Scene VIII.

Doctor (alone—looking after them).—Oh! I—under—stand!

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

The same Drawing-room.

Scene I.

(Mr. Podczaski enters, followed by a servant.)

Podczaski.—Tell the Doctor that Mr. Podczaski wishes to see him on an important matter.

Servant.—The Doctor is very busy. The princess is ill. But I will tell him (goes out).

Podczaski (alone).—I have enough of this work for nothing. The countess sends me about to agitate for her, but when I ask her for some money, she answers: We shall see about it after the election. She is an aristocrat and she refuses a hundred florins to a nobleman. To the deuce with such business. I had better try elsewhere, to serve the Doctor. He pays because he has common sense. And as he will bite them, then I will rise in consideration.

Scene II.

Podczaski. Jozwowicz.

Podczaski.—Your servant, sir.

Doctor.—What can I do for you?

Podczaski.—Well, sir, I am going to come right to the point. You know what services I have rendered the Countess Miliszewski?

Doctor.—Yes, you have been agitating against me in favor of Count Miliszewski.

Podczaski.—No, not at all, sir. Well, sir, it was so, but I am going to change that, and you may be certain——

Doctor.—In a word, what do you wish, sir?

Podczaski.—God sees, sir, that I served the countess faithfully, and it cost me quite a little, but on consulting my conscience I have concluded not to act any more against such a man as you, sir, for the sake of the country.

Doctor.—I appreciate your sentiments, which are those of a good citizen. You do not wish to act against me any longer?

Podczaski.—No, sir!

Doctor.—You are right. Then you are with me?

Podczaski.—If I may offer my services——

Doctor.—I accept.

Podczaski (aside).—He is a man—I have a hundred florins in my pocket already. (Aloud) My gratitude——

Doctor.—Mine will be shown after the election.

Podczaski.—Oh!

Scene III.

The same. Jan Miliszewski—then Anton.

Jan.—Good-morning, doctor. Is my mother here?

Doctor.—The countess is not here.

Jan.—We came together, but mamma went directly to the prince's apartment. I remained alone and I cannot find my way to the prince's apartment. (Seeing Podczaski, who bows to him) Ah! Mr. Podczaski, what are you doing here?

Podczaski.—Your servant, sir. Well, I came to consult the doctor— I have rheumatism in my feet.

Jan.—Doctor, will you be kind enough to show me to the Prince's apartment?

Doctor.—They are in the left wing of the château.

Jan.—Thank you. But later I would like to have a talk with you.

Doctor.—I will be at your service, sir.

(Jan goes toward the door. He knocks against Anton.)

Anton.—I beg your pardon, sir.

Jan.—Pardon (he adjusts his monocle and looks at Anton—then goes out).

Anton (to Doctor).—I was told you were here and I rushed. Listen, a matter of great importance. (Seeing Podczaski) What! You are here? Our adversary here?

Podczaski (speaking in Anton's ear).—I am no longer your adversary.

Anton (looking at him).—So much the better then—but leave us alone just the same.

Podczaski (aside).—Bad. (Aloud) Gentleman, do not forget me. (Aside) The devil has taken my hundred florins. (He goes out.)

Anton.—What did he wish?

Doctor.—Money.

Anton.—Did you give it to him?

Doctor.—No.

Anton.—You did well. We do not bribe. But no matter about that. What good luck that they put up Miliszewski for a candidate. Otherwise you would be lost because Husarski would have had the majority.

Doctor.—Anton, I am sure that we will be defeated.

Anton.—No! What am I for? Uf! How tired I am. Let me rest for five minutes (he sits down). Good gracious! how soft the furniture is here. We must donate some money for some public purpose. Have you any money?

Doctor.—I have some.

Anton.—We are going to give that money to build a school.

Doctor.—Here is the key of my desk—you

will find some ready money there, and some checks.

Anton.—Very well, but I must rest a moment. In the mean while what is the news here? You are not looking well. Your eyes have sunken. Upon my word, I was not so much in love with my wife. Speak—I will rest in the mean while—but speak frankly.

Doctor.—I will be frank with you.

Anton.—What more?

Doctor.—That marriage will be broken off.

Anton.—Why.

Doctor.—Because there are times when these people do not succeed in anything.

Anton.—To the garret with those peacocks. And what about that cannibal Pretwic?

Doctor.—A long story. The princess has mistaken the sympathy which she feels for him for something more serious. To-day she knows that she does not love him.

Anton.—That is good. Truly, it looks as

though they were pursued by fate. It is the lot of races that have lived too long.

Doctor.—Implacable logic of things.

Anton.—Then she is not going to marry him. I pity them, but to the deuce with sentimentality!

Doctor.—She would marry him if it killed her to keep her word. But there is a third person entangled in the matter—Count Drahomir.

Anton.—At every step one meets a count! He betrays Pretwic?

Doctor.—What a blockhead you are.

Anton.—Well, frankly speaking, I do not care one whit for your drawing-room affairs.

Doctor.—Drahomir and she do not know that they love each other. But something attracts them to each other. What is that force? They do not ask. They are like children.

Anton.—And how will you profit from all this?

Doctor.—Listen, you democrat. When two knights are in love with one noble damsel, that love usually ends dramatically—and the third party usually gets the noble damsel.

Anton.—And the knights?

Doctor.—Let them perish.

Anton.—What then do you suppose will happen?

Doctor.—I do not know. Pretwic is a passionate man. He does not foresee anything—I see only the logic of things which is favorable to me, and I shall not be stupid enough to place any obstacles to my happiness.

Anton.—I am sure you will help it along in case of need.

Doctor.—Well, I am a physician. It is my duty to assist nature.

Anton.—The programme is ready. I know you. I only wish to ask you how you know

what you say is so. Maybe it is only a story.

Doctor.—I can have verification of it through the princess's ex-governess.

Anton.—You must know as soon as possible.

Doctor.—Mrs. Czeska will be here in a moment. I asked her to come here.

Anton.—Then I am going. Do you know what? Do not help nature too much, because it would be——

Scene IV.

The same. Mrs. Czeska.

Czeska (entering).—You wished to speak to me?

Doctor.—Yes, madam.

Anton (bows to Mrs. Czeska, then speaks to Joswowicz).—I am going to get the money and I will be back in a moment.

Doctor.—Very well. (Anton goes out.)

Czeska.—Who is that gentleman?

Doctor.—A pilot.

Czeska.—What do you mean?

Doctor.—He guides the boat in which I am sailing. As for the rest, he is a horribly honest man.

Czeska.—I do not understand very well. What did you wish to speak to me about?

Doctor.—About the princess. You are both like mother and daughter, and you should have her entire confidence. What is the matter with her? She conceals something—some sorrow. As a doctor I must know everything, because in order to cure physical disease one must know the moral cause. (Aside) The spirit of Æsculapius forgive me this phrase.

Czeska.—My good sir, what are you asking about?

Doctor.—I have told you that the princess conceals some sorrow.

Czeska.—I do not know.

Doctor.—We both love her; let us then speak frankly.

Czeska.—I am willing.

Doctor.—Then, does she love her fiancé?

Czeska.—How can you ask me such a question? If she did not, she would not be betrothed to him. It is such a simple thing that even I do not talk to her about it any more.

Doctor.—You say: "I do not talk about it any more"; so you have already talked about it.

Czeska.—Yes. She told me that she was afraid she did not love him enough. But every pure soul fears that it does not fulfil its duty. Why did you ask me that?

Doctor (saluting her).—I have my reasons. I wished to know. (Aside) I am wasting my time with her.

Scene V.

The same. Jan Miliszewski.

Jan.—I could not find mamma. Good-morning, madam. Do I intrude?

Czeska.—Not at all, sir. (To Jozwowicz) She will do her duty; rest assured of that.

Doctor.—Thank you. (Czeska goes out.)

Jan.—Doctor.

Doctor.—I am listening to you, sir.

Jan.—Let us speak frankly. Mamma wishes me to become a member of parliament, but I do not care for it.

Doctor.—You are too modest, sir.

Jan.—You are sneering, and I do not know how to defend myself. But I am frank with you—I would not care a bit about being elected to parliament if it were not for my mamma. When mamma wishes for something it must be accomplished. All women

of the family of Srokoszynski are that way, and mamma is of that family.

Doctor.—But, count, you have a will of your own.

Jan.—That is the trouble—the Miliszewskis are all ruled by the women. It is our family characteristic, sir.

Doctor.—A knightly characteristic indeed! But what can I do for you?

Jan.—I am not going to oppose you.

Doctor.—I must be as frank with you as you are with me. Until now you have helped me.

Jan.—I don't know how, but if it is so, then you must help me in your turn.

Doctor.—In what?

Jan.—It is a very delicate question. But you must not tell mamma anything about it.

Doctor.—Certainly not.

Jan.—Mamma wishes me to marry the princess, but I, sir, I do not want——

Doctor.—You do not want?

Jan.—It astonishes you?

Doctor.—I must be frank——

Jan.—I do not wish to because I do not wish to. When a man does not feel like marrying, then he does not feel like it. You will suppose that I am in love with some one else? It may be. But it is not with the princess. Naturally, when mamma says: "Jan, go ahead," I go ahead, because I cannot help it. The Miliszewskis knew how to manage the men, but not the women.

Doctor.—I do not understand—how can I be useful to you?

Jan.—You can do anything in this house, so you must help me secretly, to be refused.

Doctor.—Count, you may rely on me in that matter.

Jan.—Thank you.

Doctor.—And it will be so much the easier done because the princess is betrothed.

Jan.—I did not know that any one dared to compete with me.

Doctor (aside).—What an idea! (Aloud) It is Mr. George Pretwic.

Jan.—Then they wished to make sport of me.

Doctor.—Mr. Pretwic is an audacious man. You were perfectly right when you said the question was a delicate one. The people are afraid of Mr. Pretwic; if you were to give up, people would say that——

Jan.—That I am also afraid? Then I will not give up. My dear sir, I see you do not know the Miliszewskis. We do not know how to handle the women, but there is not a coward in our family. I know that people laugh at me, but the one who would dare to call me a coward would not laugh. I will show them at once that I am not a coward. Where is Mr. Pretwic?

Doctor.—He is in the garden (pointing

through the window). Do you see him there, near the lake?

Jan.—Good-bye.

Scene VI.

Jozwowicz alone—then Anton.

Doctor.—The men who have not such sons are great! Ha! ha! ha!

Anton (rushing in).—You are here? Here are your receipts for the money. Why are you laughing?

Doctor.—Miliszewski has gone to challenge Pretwic.

Anton.—Are they crazy?

Doctor.—What an opinion she would have of Pretwic if he were to quarrel with such an idiot!

Anton.—You have done it.

Doctor.—I told you that I shall assist nature.

Anton.—Do as you please; I withdraw.

Doctor.—Good-bye. Or no, I am going also. I must prevent the adventure from going too far.

Anton.—I wanted to tell you that I must buy some food for my children. I will return the money—later on. Is it all right?

Doctor.—How can you ask? (Goes out.)

Scene VII.

Stella and Drahomir. (They enter from the garden.)

Stella.—That walk tired me. See how weak I am (sits down). Where is Mr. Pretwic?

Drahomir.—Young Miliszewksi asked to speak to him a moment. The countess is speaking to the prince. It seems that their conversation is very animated because the countess did not know that you were betrothed, and she had some designs on you.

But pray excuse me; I laugh and you suffer by it.

Stella.—I would laugh too if I did not know how much it troubles my father. And then, I pity Count Miliszewski.

Drahomir.—I understand how a similar situation would be painful to a man who was in love, but such is not the case with the count. He will console himself if his mother orders it.

Stella.—Sometimes one may be mistaken about people.

Drahomir.—Do you speak about me or Miliszewski?

Stella.—Let us say it is about you. They told me that you were a mirror of all perfections.

Drahomir.—And have you discovered that I am the personification of all faults?

Stella.—I did not say so.

Drahomir.—But you think so. But I am

not deceived. Your portrait drawn by Mr. Pretwic and the Doctor is exactly like you.

Stella.—How was the portrait?

Drahomir.—With wings at the shoulders.

Stella.—That means that I have as much dignity as a butterfly.

Drahomir.—Angels' wings are in harmony with their dignity.

Stella.—True friendship should speak the truth. Tell me some bitter one.

Drahomir.—Very bitter?

Stella.—As wormwood—or as is sometimes the case—with life.

Drahomir.—Then you are kind to me.

Stella.—For what sin shall I begin penitence?

Drahomir.—For lack of friendship for me.

Stella.—I was the first to appeal for friendship—in what respect am I untrue to it?

Drahomir.—Because you share with me

your joys, sports, laughter, but when a moment of sorrow comes, you keep those thorns for yourself. Pray share with me your troubles also.

Stella.—It is not egotism on my part. I do not wish to disturb your serenity.

Drahomir.—The source of my serenity does not lie in egotism either. George told me of you when I came here: "I know only how to look at her and how to pray to her; you are younger and more mirthful, try to amuse her." Therefore I brought all my good spirits and laid them at your feet. But I notice that I have bored you. I see a cloud on your face—I suspect some hidden sorrow, and being your best friend, I am ready to give my life to dispel that cloud.

Stella (softly).—You must not talk that way.

Drahomir (clasping his hands).—Let me talk. I was a giddy boy, but I always fol-

lowed my heart, and my heart guessed your sorrow. Since that moment a shadow fell across my joy, but I overcame it. One cannot recall a tear which has rolled down the cheek, but a friendly hand can dry it. Therefore I overcame that cloud in order that the tears should not come to your eyes. If I have been mistaken, if I have chosen the wrong path, pray forgive me. Your life will be as beautiful as a bouquet of flowers, therefore be mirthful—be mirthful.

Stella (with emotion, giving him her hand). —I shall be; being near you, I am capricious, spoiled, and a little bit ill. Sometimes I do not know myself what is the matter with me, and what I wish. I am happy; truly I am happy.

Drahomir.—Then, no matter, as Mrs. Czeska says. Let us be merry, laugh, and run in the garden and play pranks with the countess and her son.

Stella.—I have discovered the source of your mirth; it is a good heart.

Drahomir.—No, madam. I am a great good-for-nothing. But the source of true happiness is not in this.

Stella.—Sometimes I think that there is none in this world.

Drahomir.—We cannot grasp it with our common sense, and will not fly after that winged vision. Sometimes perhaps it flies near us, but before we discover it, before we stretch out our hands, it is too late!

Stella.—What sad words—too late!

Scene VIII.

The same. Jozwowicz.

Doctor (entering, laughs).—Ha! ha! Do you know what has happened?

Stella.—Is it something amusing?

Doctor.—A dreadful, tragic, but before a

ridiculous thing. Miliszewski wished to challenge Pretwic.

Stella.—For Heaven's sake!

Doctor.—You must laugh with me. If there were anything dreadful I would not frighten you, princess.

Drahomir.—And what has been the end of it?

Doctor.—I was angry with Mr. Pretwic for taking the matter so seriously.

Drahomir.—How could he help it?

Doctor.—But it would be shameful for a man like Mr. Pretwic to fight with such a poor thing.

Stella.—The doctor is right. I do not understand Mr. Pretwic.

Doctor.—Our princess must not be irritated. I have made peace between them. Mr. Pretwic did not grasp the real situation and his naturally sanguine disposition carried him away. But now that I have explained to him,

he agrees that it would be too utterly ridiculous.

Drahomir.—And what about Miliszewski?

Doctor.—I have sent him to his mamma. He is a good boy.

Stella.—I shall scold Mr. Pretwic, nevertheless.

Drahomir.—But you must not be too severe.

Stella.—You are laughing, gentlemen. I am sorry that it was necessary to explain the matter to Mr. Pretwic. I must scold him immediately (she goes out).

Scene IX.

Drahomir. Doctor.

Drahomir.—The princess is a true angel.

Doctor.—Yes, there is not a spot in the crystalline purity of her nature.

Drahomir.—It must be true when even you, a sceptic, speak of her with such enthusiasm.

Doctor.—I have been here six years.

When I came she wore short dresses. She grew by my side. Six years have their strength—it was impossible not to become attached to her.

Drahomir.—I believe you. (After a while of silence) Strange, however, that you self-made people have no hearts.

Doctor.—Why?

Drahomir.—Because—I know what you would say about her social position, but hearts are equal, so it does not matter. Then how did it happen that you, being so near the princess, did not——

Doctor (interrupting).—What?

Drahomir.—I cannot find an expression.

Doctor.—But I have found it. You are asking me why I did not fall in love with her?

Drahomir.—I hesitated to pronounce the too bold word.

Doctor.—Truly, if you, count, are lacking

in boldness, I am going to help you out, and I ask you: And you, sir?

Drahomir.—Doctor, be careful.

Doctor.—I hear some lyrical tone.

Drahomir.—Let us finish this conversation.

Doctor.—As you say, although I can speak quietly, and in order to change the conversation, I prefer to ask you: Do you think she will be happy with Mr. Pretwic?

Drahomir.—What a question! George loves her dearly.

Doctor.—I do not doubt it, but their natures are so different. Her thoughts and sentiments are as delicate as cobweb—and George? Have you noticed how hurt she was that he accepted the challenge?

Drahomir.—Why did you tell her about it?

Doctor.—I was wrong. Therefore George——

Drahomir.—Will be happy with her.

Doctor.—Any one would be happy with her,

and to every one one might give the advice to search for some one like her. Yes, count, search for some one like her (he goes out).

Drahomir (alone).—Search for some one like her—and if there is some one like her—too late (he sits down and covers his face with his hand).

Scene X.

Stella. Drahomir.

Stella (seeing Drahomir, looks at him for a while).—What is the matter with you?

Drahomir.—You here? (A moment of silence.)

Stella (confused).—I am searching for papa. Excuse me, sir, I must go.

Drahomir (softly) —Go, madam. (She goes out. At the door she stops, hesitates for a while and then disappears.) I must get away from here as soon as possible.

Scene XI.

Drahomir. Prince. Finally Joswowicz.

Prince (rushing in).—She has tormented me until now. Good gracious! Ah, it is you, Drahomir.

Drahomir.—Yes, prince. Who tormented you?

Prince.—The Countess Miliszewski. My dear boy, how can he be a member of parliament when he is so densely stupid!

Drahomir.—It is true.

Prince.—Don't you see! And then she proposed to marry him to Stella. The idea! She is already betrothed. But of course they did not know.

Drahomir.—How did you get rid of her?

Prince.—The doctor helped me out. Joswowicz is a smart man—he has more intelligence than all of us together.

Drahomir.—It is true.

Prince.—But you, Drahomir, you are smart also, are you not?

Drahomir.—How can I either affirm or deny? But Joswowicz is very intelligent, that much is certain.

Prince.—Yes. I do not like him, and I am afraid of him and I am fond of him, but I tell you I could not live without him.

Drahomir.—He is an honest man, too.

Prince.—Honest? Very well, then, but you are better because you are not a democrat. Drahomir, I love you. Stella, I love him—— Ah! She is not here.

Drahomir.—Thank you, prince.

Prince.—If I had another daughter, I would —well——

Drahomir.—Prince, pray do not speak that way. (Aside) I must run away.

Prince.—Come, have a cigar with me. We will call the others and have a talk. Joswowicz! Pretwic!

Doctor (entering).—What are your orders, Your Highness?

Prince.—You, Robespièrre, come and have a cigar. Thank you, my boy. You have rid me of the countess.

Doctor.—I will send for Pretwic, and we will join you. (He rings the bell. A servant comes in—the prince and Drahomir go out.) Ask Mr. Pretwic to come here. (The servant goes out.)

Doctor (alone).—Anton was right. I am helping along the logic. But I do not like the sap—because I am accustomed to break. (Pretwic enters.)

Scene XII.

Pretwic. Jozwowicz.

George.—I was looking for you.

Doctor.—The prince has invited us to smoke a cigar with him.

George.—Wait a moment. For God's sake

tell me what it means. Stella changes while looking at her—there is something heavy in the air. What does it mean?

Doctor.—That melancholy is the mode now.

George.—You are joking with me.

Doctor.—I know nothing.

George.—Excuse me. The blood rushes to my head. I see some catastrophe hanging over me. I thought you would say something to pacify me. I thought you were my friend.

Doctor.—Do you doubt it?

George.—Shake hands first. Then give me some advice.

Doctor.—Advice? Are you ill?

George (with an effort).—Truly, you play with me as a cat with a mouse.

Doctor.—Because I know nothing of presentiments.

George.—Did you not tell me that she is not ill?

Doctor.—No, she is wearied.

George.—You speak about it in a strange way and you have no conception of the pain that your words cause me.

Doctor.—Then try to distract her.

George.—What? Who?

Doctor.—Who? Count Drahomir, for instance.

George.—Is she fond of him?

Doctor.—And he of her also. Such poetical souls are always fond of each other.

George.—What do you mean by that?

Doctor (sharply).—And you—how do you take my words?

George (rises.)—Not another word. You understand me, and you must know that I do not always forgive.

Doctor (rises also, approaches George and looks into his eyes).—I believe you wish to frighten me. Besides this, what more do you wish?

George (after a moment of struggle with himself).—You must ask me what I did wish, because I do not now wish for anything. You have known her longer than I have, therefore I came to you as her friend and mine, and for answer you banter with me. In your eyes there shone hatred for me, although I have never wronged you. Be the judge yourself! I would be more than right in asking you: What do you wish of me, if it were not for the reason (with pride) that it is immaterial to me. (He goes out.)

Doctor.—We shall see.

Scene XIII.

Jozwowicz. Servant.

Servant.—A messenger brought this letter from Mr. Anton Zuk.

Doctor.—Give it to me. (The servant goes out. Doctor looks at the door through which George went out.) Oh, I can no longer con-

trol my hatred. I will crush you into dust; and now I shall not hesitate any longer. (Opens letter feverishly) Damnation, I must be going there at once.

Scene XIV.

Jozwowicz. Mrs. Czeska.

Czeska (enters swiftly).—Doctor, I am looking for you.

Doctor.—What has happened?

Czeska.—Stella is ill. I found her weeping.

Doctor (aside.)—Poor child! (Aloud) I will go to see her at once. (They go out.)

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

The same Drawing Room.

SCENE I.

Jozwowicz. Drahomir.

(Joswowicz sits at table writing in note-book. Drahomir enters.)

Drahomir.—Doctor, I came to bid you farewell.

Doctor (rising suddenly).—Ah, you are going away?

Drahomir.—Yes.

Doctor.—So suddenly? For long?

Drahomir.—I am returning to-day to Swietlenice, to George; to-morrow I leave for Paris.

Doctor.—One word—have you said anything to any one of your plans?

Drahomir.—Not yet. I only made up my mind an hour ago.

Doctor.—Then Mr. Pretwic knows nothing about it as yet?

Drahomir.—No; but why do you ask?

Doctor (aside).—I must act now—otherwise everything is lost. (Aloud) Count, I have not much time to speak to you now, because in a moment I expect Anton in regard to a matter on which my whole future depends. Listen to me. I beseech you, for the sake of the peace and health of the princess, not to mention to any one that you are going away. Neither to the Prince nor to Mr. Pretwic.

Drahomir.—I do not understand you.

Doctor.—You will understand me. Now I cannot tell you anything more. In a half hour pray grant me a moment of conversation. Then you will understand me—that I guarantee you. Here is Anton. You see I cannot explain now.

Drahomir.—I will see you again. (He goes out.)

Scene II.

Anton. Jozwowicz.

Anton.—The fight is very hot. Have you the address?

Doctor.—Here it is. How goes it?

Anton.—Up to now everything is well, but I repeat—the fight is very hot. If you had not come the last time, you would have lost the battle, because Miliszewski has withdrawn and his partisans vote for Husarski. Podczaski is good for nothing. Your speech in the city hall was splendid. May thunder strike you! Your address was admired even by your enemies. Oh, we will at last be able to do something. For three days I have not slept—I have not eaten—I work and I have plenty of time, because I have lost my position.

Doctor.—You have lost your position?

Anton.—On account of the agitation against Husarski.

Doctor.—Have you found any means against him?

Anton.—I have written an article. I have brought it to you. Read it. He sues me—he will beat me. They will put me in prison, but it will be only after the election, and my article wronged him very much.

Doctor.—Very well.

Anton.—But when I am in prison you must take care of my wife and children. I love them dearly. I have three of them. It is too much—but *natura lex dura.*

Doctor.—Be assured.

Anton.—You would not believe me if I were to tell you that I am almost happy. Sometimes it seems to me that our country is a moldy room and that I open the window and let in the fresh air. We will work very hard. I believe in you, because you are an iron man.

Doctor.—I shall either perish or gain two victories.

Anton.—Two?

Doctor.—Yes; the other one even to-day, here. The events have surprised me in some way. The facts turned against me, and I was obliged to build my plans of action only a short while ago.

Anton.—Eh! If we win only there. Do you know what—I would prefer that you abandon the idea of the other victory.

Doctor.—Anton, you are mistaken.

Anton.—Because you worry a great deal. You have grown awfully thin. Look in the mirror.

Doctor.—No matter; after I have sprung the mine I shall be calmer and the mine is ready.

Anton.—But it will cost you too much.

Doctor.—Yes, but I shall not retract.

Anton.—At least be careful and do not smear your hands with the powder.

Scene III.

The same. Stella.

Stella (entering, notices Anton).—Ah, excuse me.

Doctor.—Mr. Anton Zuk, a friend of mine. (Anton bows.) What is your wish, princess?

Stella.—You told me to stay in bed and it is so hard to lie down. Mrs. Czeska went to the chapel and I escaped. Do you approve?

Doctor.—I cannot help it, princess, although I would like to scold you like a disobedient child. A few moments ago some one else begged for you also.

Stella.—Who was it?

Doctor.—Count Drahomir. And he begged so earnestly that I promised him that I would allow you to leave the bed. He wishes to have a talk with you to-day, because he will not be able to see you again.

Stella (aside).—What does it mean?

Doctor.—He will be here at five o'clock.

Stella.—Very well.

Doctor.—And now, pray, return to your room. Your dress is too thin and you might catch cold.

Scene IV.

Jozwowicz. Anton.

Anton.—Ah, that is the princess.

Doctor.—Yes, it is she.

Anton.—Very pretty, but looks as though she was made of mist. As for me, I prefer women like my wife. From such as your princess you cannot expect sturdy democrats.

Doctor.—Enough of that.

Anton.—Then I will weigh anchor and sail. I will distribute the pamphlet with your address, and then I will write another article against Husarski. If they put me in prison

they shall at least have a reason for it. Good-bye.

Doctor.—If you meet a servant, tell him that I am waiting for Count Drahomir.

Scene V.

Jozwowicz—then Drahomir.

Doctor (alone).—Let that golden-haired page go, but he must see her before he goes. This leave-taking shall be the red flag for the bull. (Drahomir enters.) I am waiting for you, sir. Is Mr. Pretwic in the château?

Drahomir.—He is with the prince.

Doctor.—Count, be seated, and let us talk.

Drahomir (uneasily).—I am listening, sir.

Doctor.—You are in love with the princess.

Drahomir.—Mr. Jozwowicz!

Doctor.—On your honor—yes or no?

Drahomir.—Only God has the right to ask me such a question. I do not dare to ask myself.

Doctor.—And your conscience?

Drahomir.—And no one else.

Doctor.—Then let us turn the question. She loves you.

Drahomir.—Be silent, sir. Oh, God!

Doctor.—Your pride is broken. You knew of it?

Drahomir.—I did not wish to know it.

Doctor.—But now you are aware of it.

Drahomir.—That is the reason why I am going away from here forever.

Doctor.—It is too late, sir. You have tangled her life and now you leave her.

Drahomir.—For God's sake, what shall I do, then?

Doctor.—Go away, but not forever, and not without telling her good-bye.

Drahomir.—Why should I add the last drop to an already overflowing cup?

Doctor.—A beautiful phrase. Can you not understand that it will hurt her good name if

you should go away suddenly without taking leave of her? And she—she is ill and she may not be able to bear your departure.

Drahomir.—I do not see any remedy——

Doctor.—There is only one. Find some pretext, bid her good-bye quietly, and tell her that you will be back. Otherwise it will be a heavy blow for her strength. You must leave her hope. She must not suspect anything. Perhaps later she will become accustomed to your absence—perhaps she will forget——

Drahomir.—It will be better for her to forget.

Doctor.—I will do my best, but I shall first throw a handful of earth on your memory.

Drahomir.—What shall I do, then?

Doctor.—To find a pretext to bid her good-bye, tell every one that you are going. Then come back—and go away. Mr. Pretwic also must not know anything.

Drahomir.—When shall I bid her good-bye?

Doctor.—In a moment. I told her. I will manage to be with Pretwic during that time. She will be here presently.

Drahomir.—I would prefer to die.

Doctor.—No one is certain of to-morrow. Be off now. (Drahomir goes out.)

Scene VI.

Jozwowicz. Then a servant.

Doctor.—How warm it is here! My head is splitting. (He rings—a servant enters.) Ask Mr. Pretwic to come here. (The servant goes out.) My head is bursting—but then I will have a long peace.

Scene VII.

Jozwowicz. George Pretwic.

George (entering).—What do you wish with me?

Doctor.—I wish to give you good advice about the princess's health.

George.—How is she?

Doctor.—Better. I allowed her to leave bed because she and Drahomir asked me to.

George.—Drahomir?

Doctor.—Yes. He wishes to talk with her. They will be here in a quarter of an hour.

George.—Jozwowicz, I am choking with wrath and pain. Drahomir avoids me.

Doctor.—But you do not suspect him.

George.—I swear to you that I have defended myself from suspicions as a man dying on the steppe defends himself from the crows—that I have bitten my hands with pain and despair—that I still defend myself. But I cannot any more. I cannot. The evidence pounds on my brain. He avoids me. He tells me that I have become an idiot—that I have become a madman, because——

Doctor.—Keep your temper. Even if he

were in love with the princess, nobody rules his own heart.

George.—Enough! You were right when you coupled his name with hers. At that moment I repulsed the thought, but it was there just the same (he strikes his breast). The fruit is ripened. Oh, what a ridiculous and dreadful part I am playing here——

Doctor.—But he saved your life.

George.—In order to take it when it began to have a certain value. His service is paid with torture, with a slain happiness, with a broken hope, with destroyed faith in myself, in him and in her.

Doctor.—Be easy.

George.—I loved that man. Tell me that I am a madman and I shall be calmed. How dreadful to think that it is he! Forgive me everything I said to you before and help me. Evil thoughts are rushing through my head.

Doctor.—Be calm—you are mistaken.

George.—Prove to me that I am mistaken and I will kneel before you.

Doctor.—You are mistaken, because Drahomir is going away.

George.—He is going away. (A moment of silence.) Oh, Lord! Then I can live without such tortures, I may hope!

Doctor (coolly and slowly).—But he is not going away forever. He said he would return.

George.—You put me on the cross again.

Doctor.—Come to your senses and do not let yourself be carried away by madness. At any rate you gain time. You can win her heart back again.

George.—No—it is done. I am sinking into a precipice.

Doctor.—Everything will be straightened out by his absence.

George (with an outburst).—But did you not tell me that he will return?

Doctor.—Listen: I agree with you that you have repaid Drahomir for the services of saving your life with your tortures. Drahomir has betrayed you and has broken the friendship between you by winning her heart. But I do not think that he is going away in order to avoid your vengeance.

George.—And to give her time to break her engagement! Yes, yes! I am cursed. I suspect him now of everything. He avoids me.

Doctor.—Mr. Pretwic.

George.—Enough. I am going to ask him when he will be back. He has saved my life once, and slain me ten times. (He tries to leave.)

Doctor.—Where are you going?

George.—To ask him how long he is going away.

Doctor.—Wait a moment. How could you ask him such a question? Perhaps he is innocent, but pride will shut his mouth and every-

thing will be lost. Stay here—you can leave only over my corpse. I am not afraid of you! —do you understand? In a moment they will be here. You wish for proofs—you shall have them. From the piazza you cannot hear them, but you can see them. You shall be persuaded with your own eyes—perhaps you will regret your impetuosity.

George (after a while).—Very well, then. May God grant that I was mistaken! Thank you—but you must not leave me now.

Doctor.—One word more. No matter what happens I shall consider you a villain if you place her life in peril by any outburst.

George.—Granted. Where shall we go?

Doctor.—On the piazza. But you have fever—you are already shaking.

George.—I am out of breath. Some one is coming. Let us be going.

Scene VIII.

Drahomir. Then Stella.

Drahomir.—The last evening and the last time. (After a while.) O Lord, thy will be done!

Stella (enters).—The Doctor told me that you wished to see me.

Drahomir.—Yes, madam. Pray forgive my boldness. A very important affair calls me home. I come to bid you good-bye.

Stella.—You are going away?

Drahomir.—To day I am going to Swietlenice, to-morrow still further. (A moment of silence.)

Stella.—Yes, it is necessary.

Drahomir.—Life has flown like a dream—it is time to wake up.

Stella.—Shall we see each other again?

Drahomir.—If God permits it.

Stella.—Then let us shake hands in fare-

well. I can assure you that you have a friend in me. Friendship is like an immortal—it is a pale flower, but does not wither. May God guide you and protect you. The heart—of a sister—will follow you everywhere. Remember——

Drahomir.—Farewell.

Stella.—Farewell. (She goes toward the door. Then suddenly turns. With a sob in her voice.) Why do you deceive me? You are going forever.

Drahomir.—Have mercy on me.

Stella.—Are you going away forever?

Drahomir.—Yes, then.

Stella.—I guessed it. But perhaps it is better —for both of us.

Drahomir.—Oh, yes. There are things which cannot be expressed, although the heart is bursting. A while ago you told me that you will remember—it will be better for you to forget.

Stella.—I cannot. (She weeps.)

Drahomir (passionately).—Then I love you, my dearest, and that is the reason why I escape. (He presses her to his breast.)

Stella (awakening).—Oh, God! (She rushes out.)

Scene IX.

Drahomir. Jozwowicz. George.

(George stops with Jozwowicz near the door.)

Drahomir.—Ah, it is you, George.

George.—Do not approach me. I have seen all. You are a villain and a coward.

Drahomir—George!

George.—In order not to soil my hand, I throw in your face our broken friendship, my trampled happiness, lost faith in God and man, endless contempt for you and myself.

Drahomir.—Enough.

George.—Do not approach me, because I will lose my self-command and will sprinkle

these walls with your brains. No, I shall not do that- -because I have promised. But I slap your face, you villain. Do you hear me?

Drahomir (after struggling with himself for a moment).—Such an insult I swear before God and man I will wash out with blood.

George.—Yes, with blood (pointing to the doctor). Here is the witness of these words.

Doctor.—At your service, gentlemen.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

The same drawing-room.

SCENE I.

Jozwowicz enters reading a dispatch.

The result of the ballotting until now: Jozwowicz, 613; Husarski, 604. At ten o'clock: Jozowwicz, 700; Husarski, 700. At 11 o'clock:

Jozwowicz, 814; Husarski, 750. The fight is hot. The final results will be known at three o'clock. (He consults his watch.)

Scene II.

Jozwowicz. George.

Doctor.—You are here?

George.—You are as afraid of me as of a ghost.

Doctor.—I thought you were elsewhere.

George.—I am going directly from here to fight. I have still an hour. The duel will take place at Dombrowa, on the Miliszewski's estate—not far from here.

Doctor.—Too near from here.

George.—Miliszewski insisted. And then you will be here to prevent the news from being known until as late as possible.

Doctor.—Doctor Krzycki will be with you?

George.—Yes.

Doctor.—Ask him to send me the news at once. I would go with you, but I must be here.

George.—You are right. If I am killed?

Doctor.—You must not think of that.

George.—There are some people who are cursed from the moment they are born, and for whom death is the only redemption. I belong to that class. I have thought everything over quietly. God knows that I am more afraid of life than of death. There is no issue for me. Suppose I am not killed—tell me what will become of me, if I kill the man whom she loves? Tell me! I will live without her, cursed by her. Do you know that when I think of my situation, and what has happened, I think some bad spirit has mixed with us and entangled everything so that only death can disentangle it.

Doctor.—A duel is very often ended by a mere wound.

George.—I insulted Drahomir gravely, and such an insult cannot be wiped out by a wound. Believe me, one of us must die. But I came to talk with you about something else.

Doctor.—I am listening to you.

George.—Frankly speaking, as I do not know what will become of me, and whether in an hour I shall be alive or not, I came to have one more look at her. Because I love her dearly. Perhaps I was too rough for her—too stupid—but I loved her. May God punish me if I have not desired her happiness. As you see me here it is true that at this moment I pity her the most and feel miserable about her future. Listen: whether I am killed or not, she cannot be mine. Drahomir cannot marry her, because he could not marry the woman whose fiancé he has killed. Of the three of us you alone will remain near her. Take care of her—guard her. Into your

hands I give her, the only treasure I ever possessed.

Doctor (quietly).—I shall carry out your wishes.

George.—And now—I may be killed. I wish to die like a Christian. If ever I have offended you, forgive me. (They shake hands. George goes out.)

Doctor (alone).—Yes, of the three of us I alone shall remain near her.

Scene III.

Jozwowicz. Anton.

Anton (rushing in).—Man, have you become an idiot? When every moment is valuable, you remain here. The results are uncertain. They have put up big posters—Husarski's partisans are catching the votes in the streets. For God's sake come with me. A carriage is waiting for us.

Doctor.—I must remain here. I cannot go

under any consideration in the world. Let be what may.

Anton.—I did not expect such conduct from you. Come and show yourself, if only for a moment, and the victory is ours. I cannot speak any more. I am dead tired. Have you become a madman? There—we have worked for him, and he clings to a petticoat and stays here.

Doctor.—Anton! Even if I should lose there I would not stir one step from here. I cannot and I will not go.

Anton.—So?

Doctor.—Yes.

Anton.—Do what you please, then. Very well. My congratulations. (He walks up and down the room; then he puts his hands in his pockets and stands before Jozwowicz.) What does it mean?

Doctor.—It means that I must remain here. At this moment Drahomir stands opposite

Pretwic with a pistol. If the news of the fight should come to the princess, she would pay for it with her life.

Anton.—They are fighting!

Doctor.—For life or death. In a moment the news will come who is killed. (A moment of silence.)

Anton.—Jozwowicz, you have done all this.

Doctor.—Yes, it is I, I crushed those who were in my way, and I shall act the same always. You have me such as I am.

Anton.—If so, I am no longer in a hurry. Do you know what I am going to tell you?

Doctor.—You must go for a while. The princess is coming. (He opens the door of a side room.) Go in there for a moment.

Scene IV.

Jozwowicz and Stella.

Stella.—Doctor, what is the matter in this house?

Doctor.—What do you mean, princess?

Stella.—Mr. Pretwic came to tell me good-bye. He was very much changed and asked me to forgive him if he ever offended me.

Doctor (aside).—A sentimental ass.

Stella.—He said that he might be obliged to go away in a few days. I have a presentiment that you are hiding something from me. What does it mean? Do not torture me any longer. I am so miserable that you should have pity on me.

Doctor.—Do not let anything worry you. What can there be the matter? An idle fancy, that is all! The care of loving hearts surrounds you. Why should you have such a wild imagination? You had better return to your apartment and do not receive any one. I will come to see you in a moment.

Stella.—Then truly there is nothing bad?

Doctor.—What an idea! Pray believe me,

I should be able to remove anything which would threaten your happiness.

Stella (stretching out her hand to him).—Oh, Mr. Jozwowicz, happiness is a very difficult thing to take hold of. May only the peace not leave us. (She goes to enter the room in which Anton is.)

Doctor.—This way, princess. Some one is waiting for me in that room. In a moment I will come to see you. Pray do not receive any one. Anton! (The princess goes out.)

Scene V.

Anton, Jozwowicz, then a Servant.

Anton.—Here I am. Poor child!

Doctor.—I cannot go for her sake. I must be here and not let the bad news reach her, for it would kill her.

Anton.—What! and you, knowing this, you still expose her, and sacrifice her for yourself?

Doctor (passionately).—I love her and I must have her, even if the walls of this house should crumble around our heads.

Anton.—Man, you are talking nonsense.

Doctor.—Man, you are talking like a nincompoop, and not like a man. You have plenty of words in your mouth, but you lack strength—you cannot face facts. Who would dare say: You have no right to defend yourself?

Anton (after a while).—Good-bye.

Doctor.—Where are you going?

Anton.—I return to the city.

Doctor.—Are you with me or against me?

Anton.—I am an honest man.

A servant (enters).—A messenger brought this letter from Miliszewski.

Doctor.—Give it to me. Go (tears the envelop and reads) "Pretwic is dead." (After a while) Ah——

Anton.—Before I go I must answer your

question as to why I am going. I have served you faithfully. I served you like a dog because I believed in you. You knew how to use me, or perhaps to use me up. I knew that I was a tool, but I did not care for that, because—— But now——

Doctor.—You give up the public affair?

Anton.—You do not know me. What would I do if I were to give up my ideas? And then, do you think that you personify public affairs? I will not give up because I have been deceived by you. But I care about something else. I was stupid to have cared for you, and I regret now that I must tell you that you have heaped up the measure and used badly the strength which is in you. Oh, I know that perhaps it would be better for me not to tell you this, perhaps to hold with you would mean a bright future for such a man as I, who have hardly the money to buy food for my wife and children. But I

cannot. Before God, I cannot! I am a poor man and I shall remain poor, but I must at least have a clear conscience. Well, I loved you almost as much as I loved my wife and children, but from to-day you are only a political number—for friendship you must look to some one else. You know I have no scruples; a man rubs among the people and he rubs off many things; but you have heaped up the measure. May I be hanged if I do not prefer to love the people than pound them! They say that honesty and politics are two different things. Elsewhere it may be so, but in our country we must harmonize them. Why should they not go together? I do not give up our ideas, but I do not care for our friendship because the man who says he loves humanity, and then pounds the people threateningly on their heads—that man is a liar; do you understand me?

Doctor.—I shall not insist upon your giving

me back your friendship, but you must listen to me for the last time. If there shall begin for me an epoch of calamity, it will begin at the moment when such people as you begin to desert me. The man who was killed was in my way to happiness—he took everything from me. He came armed with wealth, good name, social position, and all the invincible arms which birth and fortune give. With what arms could I fight him? What could I oppose to such might? Nothing except the arms of a new man—that bit of intelligence acquired by hard work and effort. He declared a mute war on me. I have defended myself. With what? With the arms which nature has given me. When you step on a worm you must not take it amiss if the worm bites you; he cannot defend himself otherwise. It is the law of nature. I placed everything on one card, and I won—or rather it is not I, but intelligence which has con-

quered. This force—the new times—have conquered the old centuries. And you take that amiss? What do you want? I am faithful, to the principle. You are retreating. I am not! That woman is necessary for my happiness because I love her. I need her wealth and her social position for my aims. Give me such weapons and I will accomplish anything. Do you know what an enormous work and what important aims I have before me? You wish me to tear down the wall of darkness, prejudice, laziness, you wish me to breathe new life into that which is dead. I cry: "Give me the means." You do not have the means, therefore I wish to get them, or I shall perish. But what now? Across the road to my plans, to my future—not only mine but everybody's—there stands a lord, a wandering knight, whose whole merit lies in the fact that he was born with a coat of arms. And have I not the right to crush him? And

you wish me to fall down on my knees before him? Before his lordship—to give up everything for his sake? No! You do not know me. Enough of sentiment. A certain force is necessary and I have it, and I shall make a road for myself and for all of you even if I should be obliged to trample over a hundred such as Pretwic.

Anton.—No, Jozwowicz, you have always done as you wanted with me, but now you cannot do it. As long as there was a question of convictions I was with you, but you have attacked some principles which are bigger than either you or I, more stable and immutable. You cannot explain this to me, and you yourself must be careful. At the slightest opportunity you will fall down with all your energy as a man. The force you are attacking is more powerful than you are. Be careful, because you will lose. One cannot change a principle: straight honesty is the

same always. Do what you please, but be careful. Do you know that human blood must always be avenged? It is only a law of nature. You ask me whether I am going to leave you? Perhaps you would like to be given the right to fire on the people from behind a fence when it will suit you. No, sir. From to-day there must be kept between us a strict account. You will be a member of parliament, but if you think we are going to serve you, and not you us, you are greatly mistaken. You thought that the steps of the ladder on which you will ascend are composed of rascals? Hold on! We, who have elected you—we, in whose probity you do not believe—we will watch you and judge you. If you are guilty we will crush you. We have elected you; now you must serve.

Doctor (passionately).—Anton!

Anton.—Quiet. In the evening you must

appear before the electors. Good-bye, Mr. Jozwowicz. (He goes out.)

Doctor (alone).—He is the first.

Scene VI.

Jozwowicz. Jan Miliszewski.

Jan (appears in the half-open door).—Pst!

Doctor.—Who is there?

Jan.—It is I, Miliszewski. Are you alone?

Doctor.—You may enter. What then?

Jan.—Everything is over. He did not live five minutes. I have ordered them to carry the body to Miliszewo.

Doctor.—Your mother is not here?

Jan.—I sent her to the city. To-day is election day and mamma does not know that I have withdrawn, therefore she will wait for the evening papers in the hope that she will find my name among those elected.

Doctor.—Did no one see?

Jan.—I am afraid they will see the blood. He bled dreadfully.

Doctor.—A strange thing. He was such a good marksman.

Jan.—He permitted himself to be killed. I saw that very plainly. He did not fire at Drahomir at all. He did not wish to kill Drahomir. Six steps—it was too near. It was dreadful to look at his death. Truly, I would have preferred to be killed myself. They had to fire on command—one! two! three! We heard the shot, but only one. We rushed —Pretwic advanced two steps, knelt and tried to speak. The blood flowed from his mouth. Then he took up the pistol and fired to one side. We were around him and he said to Drahomir: "You have done me a favor and I thank you. This life belonged to you, because you saved it. Forgive me," he said, "brother!" Then he said: "Give me your hand" and expired. (He wipes his forehead

with a handkerchief.) Drahomir threw himself on his breast—it was dreadful. Poor Princess Stella. What will become of her now?

Doctor.—For God's sake, not a word in her presence. She is ill.

Jan.—I will be silent.

Doctor.—You must control your emotion.

Jan.—I cannot. My knees are trembling.

Scene VII.

The same. The prince leaning on Stella's shoulder, and Mrs. Czeska.

Prince.—I thought Pretwic was with you. Jozwowicz, where is Pretwic?

Doctor.—I do not know.

Stella.—Did he tell you where he was going?

Doctor.—I know nothing about it.

Czeska (to Jan).—Count, what is the matter with you? You are so pale.

Jan.—Nothing. It is on account of the heat.

Prince.—Jozwowicz, Pretwic told me——

Scene VIII.

(The door opens suddenly. Countess Miliszewska rushes in).

Countess.—Jan, where is my Jan? O God, what is the matter? How dreadful!

Doctor (rushing toward her).—Be silent, madam.

Stella.—What has happened?

Countess.—Then you have not killed Pretwic? You have not fought?

Doctor.—Madam, be silent.

Stella.—Who is killed?

Countess.—Stella, my dearest, Drahomir has killed Pretwic.

Stella.—Killed! O God!

Doctor.—Princess, it is not true.

Stella.—Killed! (She staggers and falls.)

Doctor.—She has fainted. Let us carry her to her chamber.

Prince.—My child!

Czeska.—Stelunia! (The prince and Jozwowicz carry Stella. The countess and Czeska follow them.)

Jan (alone).—It is dreadful. Who could have expected that mamma would return! (The countess appears in the door.) Mamma, how is the princess?

Countess.—The doctor is trying to bring her to her senses. Until now he has not succeeded. Jan, let us be going.

Jan (in despair).—I shall not go. Why did you return from the city?

Countess.—For you. To-day is election day—have you forgotten it?

Jan.—I do not wish to be a member of parliament. Why did you tell her that Pretwic was killed?

Scene IX.

The same. Jozwowicz.

Countess and Jan together.—What news?

Doctor.—Everything is over. (The bell is heard tolling in the chapel of the chateau.)

Jan (frightened).—What, the bell of the chapel? Then she is dead! (Jozwowicz comes to the front of the stage and sits down.)

Scene X.

The same. Podczaski.

Podczaski (rushing in suddenly).—Victory! Victory! The deputation is here. (Voices behind the stage) Hurrah! Hurrah! for victory!

Jozwowicz.—I have lost!

FINIS.

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